Calgary metro

The rise of the *occasional* vegan

metroLIFE

Your essential daily news | WEDNESDAY, JULY 6, 2016 | High 20°C/Low 9°C Cloudy

Buoyed by the minimum wage

LABOUR

October hike to see grocery union seek higher hourly pay

Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

The president of a Calgary union representing more than 30,000 Safeway and Real Canadian Superstore workers says October's minimum-wage hike will prompt the union to negotiate higher hourly wages for its unionized staff.

As Alberta's minimum wage increases to $12.20 per hour by Oct. 1 — and eventually to $15 per hour on Oct. 1, 2018 — people earning anywhere from 25-30 per cent higher than the minimum wage will experience what the Calgary Chamber of Commerce calls "wage inflation."

That inflation will have "a great impact" on the bottom line of employers, according to Chamber spokesman Scott Crockatt.

But Gil McGowan, president of the Alberta Federation of Labour, said only one of the more than 3,000 collective agreements in the province has a clause that tied union pay increases to the minimum-wage hike.

"The notion we're fighting for a $15 minimum wage simply to increase union wages is absurd," McGowan said.

But although there is only one agreement with an elevator clause, UFCW local 401 president Doug O'Halloran said he intends to bargain for an agreement in which unionized employee wages would increase by the same amount the minimum wage increases for non-unionized employees.

That means a unionized employee would make about $16 per hour to the non-unionized wage of $15 hourly.

"It's going to cause a bit of a friction if everybody at the bottom is going up and then people on the scales are not going up as well," he said. "If minimum wage goes up, other wages should go up as well."

But McGowan said only 6 per cent of the province's unionized workers earn $15 per hour or less, compared to the 22 per cent of non-unionized workers.

"While the minimum wage may have a bearer on bargaining, for the vast majority of unions, that simply will not be the case," he said.

RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Your essential daily news

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Secondary suite plan inadequate, says firm

APPLICATION PROCESS

Developer says that suites belong in the suburbs

Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

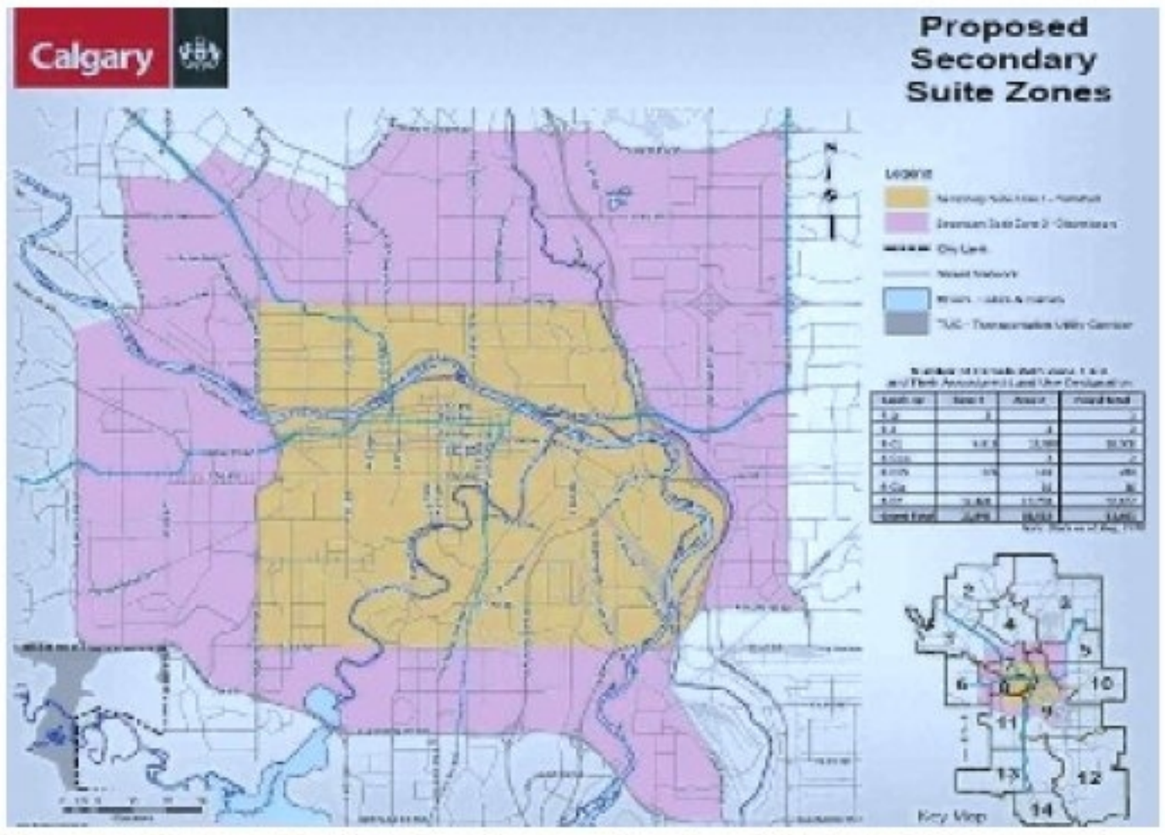
After a marathon two-day sitting, Calgary City Council still didn't get through its entire agenda, including a reform to the secondary suite application process.

Ironically, the motion was delayed in part because it took council so long to get through nearly 20 secondary suite applications — a problem they hope to solve.

Coun. Shane Keating and seven other councillors are suggesting the city allow suites within a central section of the city as long as they meet code, and allow the Calgary Planning Commission to make the decision for homes within a secondary zone.

"Rather than us trying to change the system and go completely one way or the other, let's put it in a place where it's a good compromise on all sides, and then evaluate what works and what doesn't," said Keating in a previous interview.

But the changes, if they pass, won't do much good according to Nawaz Damji, the owner of Equium group — a construction company that specializes in building legal secondary suites.



A map shows the proposed zone boundaries where secondary suites could be allowed without approval, if they are built to code. A developer says most suites need to be built outside this zone. COURTESY CITY OF CALGARY

"By blanket rezoning those areas — most of those areas have smaller lots. They really don't have a lot of options to add a suite," said Damji.

He said in the inner city, many building lots have already been subdivided, so they have 7.5 metres of street frontage. While the city does now allow lots of that size to add a suite, they need three parking spaces — something Damji said is almost impossible. He said parking is a red herring anyway — an excuse used by people who don't want to see more local density.

"There is nothing stopping a person from being a car collector, parking five cars in the street, two in his driveway, and two in his garage," said Damji. "But suddenly if there's a suite we have a parking problem."

He believes if the city wants real reform on secondary suites, it needs to allow them in the communities outside the proposed zone as well.

"We don't have to build new fire stations, new infrastructure, new power, and new water to new areas if more people can live in the existing area. So it's more environmentally friendly," he said.

ACCIDENT

Two-vehicle crash hurts 3 pedestrians

Two vehicles collided at the corner of Centre Street and 4 Avenue Tuesday afternoon, injuring three pedestrians.

Calgary EMS responded with four ambulances around 3:40 p.m.

A sedan was in the middle of Centre Street while an SUV had crashed into a building.

There were signs that emergency workers had jacked up the SUV to extricate a pedestrian from underneath.

This sedan collided with an SUV Tuesday afternoon, sending the SUV onto the sidewalk and harming three pedestrians.

EMS spokesperson Adam Loria said four people were transported to hospital.

A woman believed to be in her 70s was transported to Foothills Medical Centre with multiple serious, potentially life-threatening injuries.

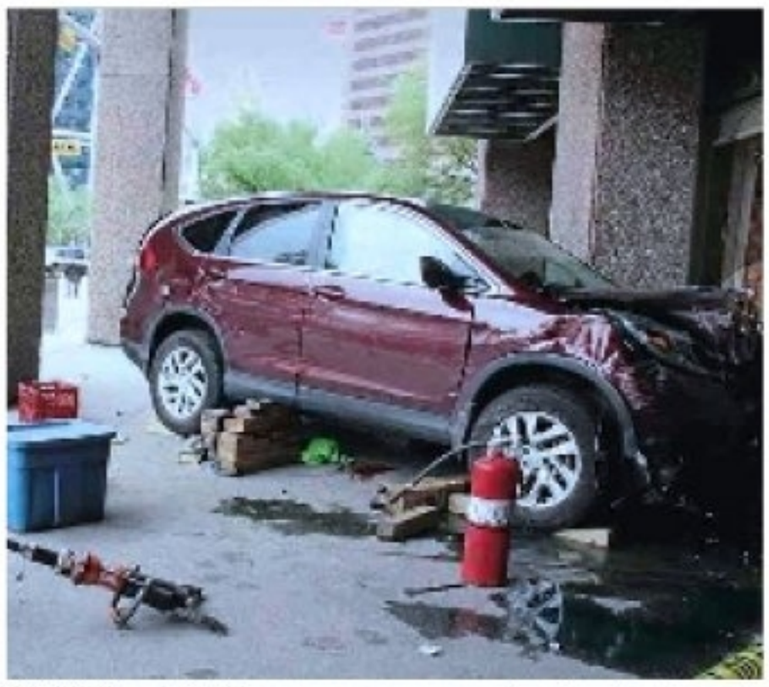
A woman in her 30s, also a pedestrian, was taken to Foothills Medical Centre with minor injuries.

A man in his 20s who was driving one of the vehicles was taken to hospital with minor injuries.

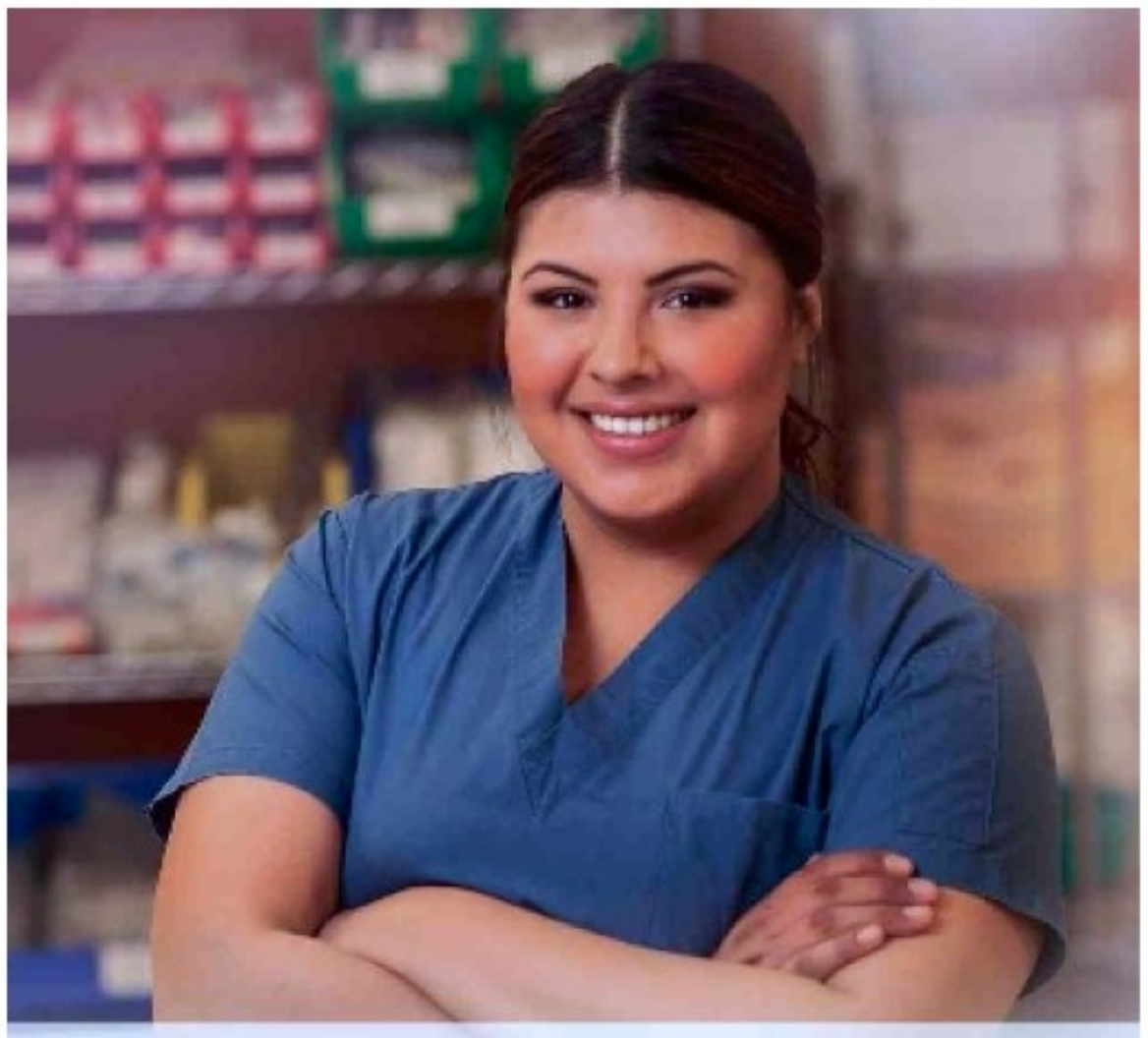
A woman in her 80s who was inside the building when the vehicle struck it was taken to Rockyview Hospital with minor injuries.

There is no word on any other injuries. Police are investigating.

BRODIE THOMAS/METRO



This SUV was lifted by emergency responders to extract a collision victim at the corner of Centre Street and 4 Avenue.
BRODIE THOMAS/METRO



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James Stauch, his wife Lisa and daughter Nahla stand by their front-yard swing in Shaganappi. City bylaw officers told the family they have to take the swing down this week. BRODIE THOMAS / METRO

Second front-yard swing condemned

BYLAWS

City tells family to remove it, as councillor vows to help on issue

Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

Another front-yard swing will be taken down this week, but the area councillor says he'll be looking for a way to make swings in public places work.

James Stauch said a bylaw officer knocked on the door of his Shaganappi home Monday and informed him that a swing he had put on a front-yard tree last fall has to come down.

"The bylaw officer was really nice," said Stauch. "He said, 'I hate to be the messenger but I drew the short straw today.'"

The swing was for Stauch's six-year-old daughter Nahla.

"She'd be out there using it every day — sometimes as a swing but mostly just as a seat to sit and contemplate life and nature."

As with a swing in Bridgeland Metro reported on in June, Stauch's swing was hanging from a tree on public property. The mature ash abuts against the sidewalk and is therefore within the city's right-of-way.

Unlike the Bridgeland swing, there was no anonymous complaint from a neighbour.

Because the swing was so close to the sidewalk, the family was happy to share it with the community.

"The minute we put it up, it seems to kind of bring some life to the street and make it a little more vibrant and neighbourly," he said. "When you think about Mayor Nenshi's challenge about three things you can do for Calgary, it seems like this is a contribution."

However the city's urban forestry lead doesn't see it quite that way. Jeannette Wheeler said swings damage trees over time.

"In Calgary, trees are tough to grow," she said.

"It's a wonderfully treed city that we have. We do this because we can't allow anything attached to the tree."

Her advice to citizens is to make use of swings at public parks, or to hang swings in trees on their own property, which the city can't stop.

Coun. Evan Woolley said he'll be strongly encouraging his fellow councillors to find a way around the issue.

"My goal is to have that six-year-old girl swinging from her front-yard tree again as quickly as possible," he said.

RESIDENTIAL TRAFFIC

Police want to hear from you

Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

Calgary's neighborhood concerns about speeding and residential traffic are set to get a little TLC.

Starting in Sept. 2016, police will begin hosting open houses in the city's 14 wards to collect and analyze community concerns when it comes to residential traffic.

"It gives the police service the ability to verify a number of perceptions," said Coun. Shane Keating.

He initially proposed that council direct police to create options for residential traffic safety enforcement in January.

On Wednesday, Calgary Police Service is scheduled to update councillors on their plans to overhaul residential traffic safety, complete with an implementation plan. The report details continuing with initiatives like education, concentrated enforcement, but adds open houses, and open data for each ward, which will be added online.

"They're willing to look at electronic as well as manned enforcement in the high-needs areas," said Keating. "I think this will go a long way to saying, 'OK, we're hearing what's being said'"

Keating said communities in every ward have been asking for this from police.

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Visser family, insurance sort out funeral costs

MEMORIAL

Clay Visser's body was found 2 days after policy expired

Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

The family of Clay Visser nearly had a very steep price to pay for funeral costs when they found out his insurance policy had expired just two days before he was discovered.

Visser's body was discovered, June 2, in his truck in Marlborough, after disappearing in October 2015.

Shari Heiser, Visser's sister said they were told by her brother's employer, Cascade Carriers, that his insurance had expired two days prior to his body being found and they wouldn't be able to make a claim.

"The medical examiner said his date of death is June 2, yet he was pretty badly decomposed by this time," she said. "My mom is having to pay out of pocket for his memorial and everything because there are two days between when his benefits ended and when he was found."

A representative from the Solicitor General's office, who oversees the Medical Examiner's Office, said this is common practice.

"If the specific date and time of death can be determined, then the date of death is listed as when the person was found," said the spokeswoman.

Heiser said although she understands this, it's unfair. She said it's clear her brother had died much earlier, yet, according to Heiser Cascade Carriers said he wouldn't be able to collect from his Great West Life Assurance Company group benefits plan.

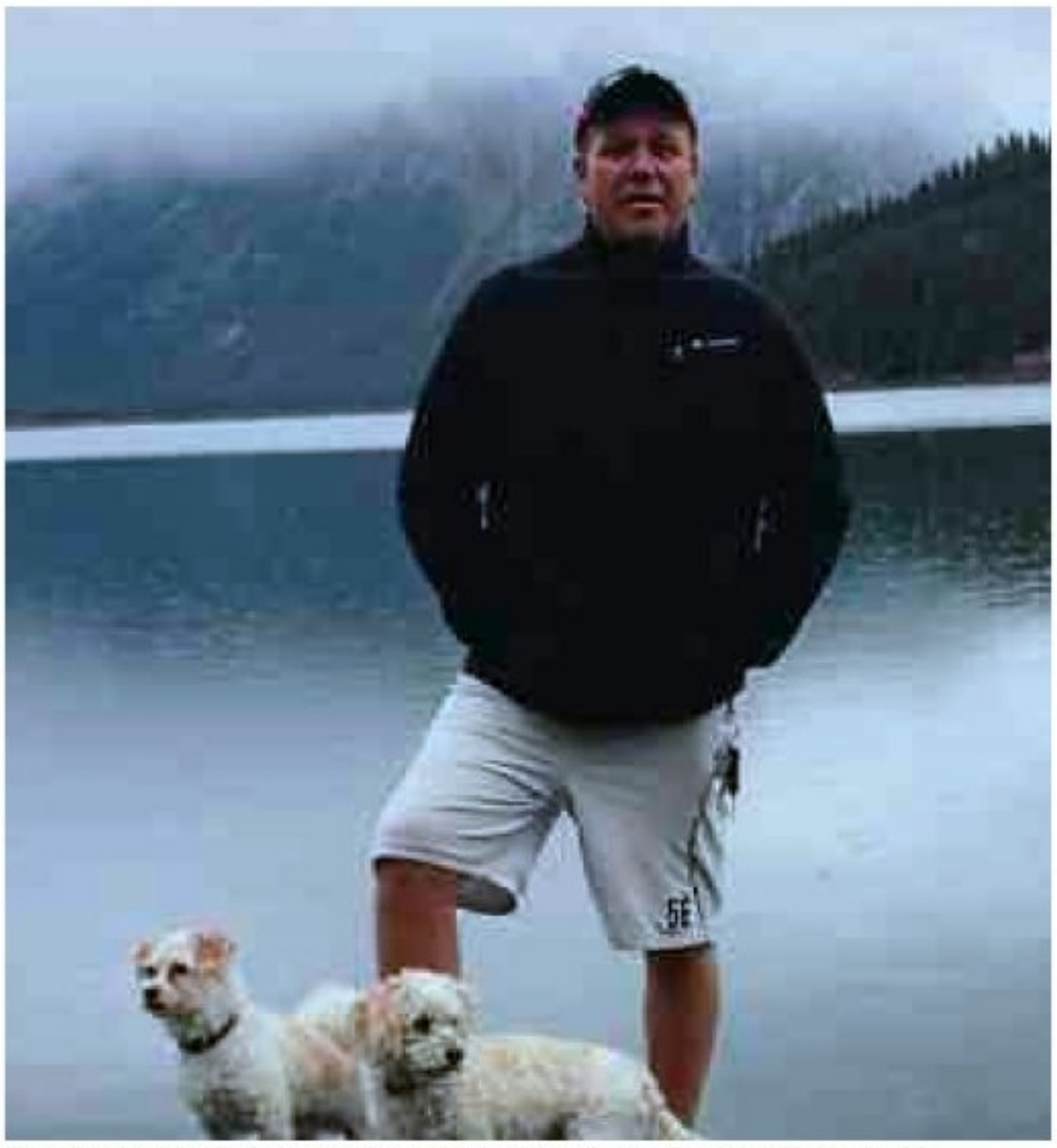
"The funeral service itself was $3,000 and I wasn't about to have a bargain basement service for him so there was extra costs," she said. "It would be helpful if he'd qualified for insurance; obviously these are unique circumstances. "

Metro reached out to the Great West Life, who hadn't heard from Cascade Carriers about the situation. After learning about the extenuating circumstances and contacting Heiser, they sent Metro a statement explaining Diane Bezdikian, senior vice-president of group benefits would now be working with the family.

"We take client concerns seriously, and we are working directly with Mr. Visser's family to address this matter," she said.

In a later conversation with Metro, Heiser said it was their mistake not speaking directly with the insurance company, and said she's happy they're working with her family to help them through the tragedy.

Metro spoke with a representative from Cascade Carriers who did not return requests for a comment.



Clay Visser went missing in October 2015 and his body was discovered in his truck in Marlborough on June 2. CONTRIBUTED

POLICE

Man steals car, goes on rampage

Police have arrested a man after a two-hour rampage in a stolen vehicle that ended when the vehicle hit a business in southeast Calgary early Tuesday.

Calgary police were called to the area around 52 Street and 26 Avenue NE around 12:30 a.m. after reports that a man was assaulting a woman in a nearby parking lot.

When police arrived, the couple jumped into a white Jeep Cherokee that had earlier been reported stolen. They fled northbound in the southbound lanes of 52 Street, nearly clipping the marked police vehicle responding to the call.

According to police, after leaving the parking lot, the driver deliberately drove into oncoming traffic for a number of hours at speeds between 140 and 180 kilometres per hour, running several red lights in the process. With HAWC tracking the vehicle overhead, police saw a number of drivers having to take evasive action to avoid colliding with the rampaging vehicle.

Shortly before 2 a.m., the driver attempted to steal another vehicle in the parking lot of a downtown casino, but failed. At that time, police said, the driver got back in to the vehicle and drove southbound on Macleod Trail at speeds of 140 km/h, on rims as the tires had blown.

The suspect eventually lost control of the SUV in the 5500 block of Macleod Trail when it hit a tree and careened into a nearby business.

Charges are pending against the male driver, and police continue to investigate. METRO

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As you head down to the grounds for some Stampede fun this coming week you might notice that your jeans are a bit too tight. Maybe your belly is bulging over your belt buckle, or perhaps your saddlebags are on your thighs instead of your horse. If you've grown too big for your britches, I've got good news! CoolSculpting® can freeze away fat... on your belly, on your backside or even your shooting arm. We freeze fat on cowgirls and cowboys too. Just for fun during Stampede week we are giving away a $100 Gift Card with every CoolSculpting purchase.

The technology behind CoolSculpting was born in the 1970's from the simple observation that children who were eating a lot of popsicles were developing dimples in their cheeks where dimples had not previously existed. It was also observed that women riding horses in the winter were reporting fat loss on their inner thighs. Research determined that when fat is exposed to extreme temperatures for a specific period of time it will freeze, while other tissue remains unharmed. Now, that called for some further investigation! Surely this phenomenon could be put to good use!

Research that was done at Harvard Medical School determined that when fat cells are frozen they crystallize and undergo apoptosis. What this means in layman's terms is that the cold exposure causes the cells to die much the same as they would from natural old-age. The difference is that when cells die of old-age they replicate themselves before they pass away. In this case there is no time to replicate

Those fat cells are gone for good

This revolutionary fat freezing procedure is a clinically proven alternative to liposuction that can reduce localized pockets of fat. CoolSculpting is most often used to target fat on the abdomen, the outer thighs, and the flanks. Other areas that patients commonly seek out include back fat, manboobs, inner thighs, and arms. In most cases only one treatment is required, although patients looking to de-bulk may require a second round. Fat clears gradually from the body over a few weeks through the body's natural physiological processes.

Six handpieces of various sizes accommodate different areas of the body. A large handpiece is used for debulking, while smaller handpieces are available for sculpting areas with less fat. We can freeze away muffin tops, love handles, saddlebags, batwings, manboobs and backboobs. We can even freeze your double chin. During a treatment the appropriate sized applicator is applied based on the shape of the body and the amount of fat to be treated. A thin protective pad saturated with coupling gel is then placed on the treatment area and the appropriate applicator is applied. Then you simply relax for an hour or two while the fat freezes.

Application of any of the handpieces is known as a cycle. How many cycles you will need to achieve the result you seek will be determined with an assessment at the time of your consultation. There are other body contouring treatments available, but if there was any other treatment that could destroy more fat than Coolsculpting we would buy it. Instead we bought a third Coolsculpting unit. Skinpossible can treat up to three areas of the body at the same time!

There are other laser clinics so why choose Skinpossible? Because not all treatments work equally well. At Skinpossible we pride ourselves in offering only the very latest in breakthrough technologies. We have more technology than any other clinic in Calgary and all of our technology is tier-one within its class.

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AFFORDABLE HOUSING

New East Village complex

The Calgary Housing Company (CHC) has made way for a new affordable housing complex in East Village.

On Monday, the CHC announced it acquired East Village Place, a 163-unit residential building located in East Village.

Coun. Brian Pincott, CHC Board Chair, said the acquisition secures the building as a place for affordable housing in the long-term.

East Village Place will be added to more than 7,000 subsidized and affordable housing units currently operated and managed by the CHC.

METRO

INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Report on mayor's Uber stance coming

Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

Coun. Ward Sutherland said a report from integrity commissioner Allen Sulatycky on Mayor Naheed Nenshi's comments made in a Boston ridesharing vehicle will be made public on July 25.

Sutherland said the commissioner needed terms of reference from the council before he could release the report, and those were passed on Monday afternoon.

The report will be put on the agenda of the July 25 council meeting. Sutherland said under the terms of reference, it will initially go to the councillors during an in-camera session.

Rescue crew recounts Antarctica mission

MEDICAL EVACUATION

Twin otter crew braved polar winter for two sick workers

Kenn Borek Air pilots Wally Dobchuk, right, Sebastien Trudel, centre, and maintenance engineer Mike McCrae pose with the Twin Otter airplane they used in a successful medical evacuation of two researchers from Antarctica, in Calgary Tuesday. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Calgary-based crew that flew to a South Pole research station sang songs and snacked on hot soup during the perilous medical mission.

Pilot Wally Dobchuk and the rest of his team from Kenn Borek Air downplayed their experiences from last month as they cracked jokes at a news conference in Calgary on Tuesday.

"Running out of spicy Thai soup, which we did," deadpanned Dobchuk when asked about his greatest fear.

They also allayed boredom by entertaining themselves.

"We're pretty good singers," cracked co-pilot Sebastien Trudel.

For some reason everyone seemed fond of the song In the Jungle, said Dobchuk.

"It was pretty good a cappella … but we only remembered two verses. We sang it for three or four hours trying to kill the 9 1/2-hour flight."

The Twin Otter turboprop plane made the daring rescue flight in Antarctica's harsh winter.

The rescue team flew the 4,800-kilometre roundtrip from the Britain's Antarctic Rothera station to the South Pole and returned to Rothera with two sick workers. They were transferred to a second plane for the flight to Punta Arenas, Chile.

The operation, coming right after the equinox, was the darkest and coldest of all past missions to the South Pole for medical evacuation. Normally planes don't go to the polar outpost from February to October because of the dangers of flying in the pitch dark and extreme cold. The sun in the Southern Hemisphere will not rise at the South Pole until the first day of spring in September. The temperature at the South Pole was -60 C.

"There's lots of monitoring on the gauges of the plane, on the weather, every minute we do a rethink of where we are. Are we going the right direction first? We just make ourselves scenarios if whatever was to happen here, this is our way out for a safe landing somewhere," said Trudel.

Dobchuk said they've flown the route before so it seemed like a normal operation.

"It's all stuff we do in the daylight and even when the sun's out we often fly the route in

> **You kind of get a feeling of where you're going.**
> Wally Dobchuk, on flying in the dark via GPS alone

cloud, which is no different than the sun being down. We can't see anything so we go along with the GPS … and you kind of get a feeling of where you're going."

Dobchuk said there are always concerns about a plane icing up, but the wings of Twin Otters have air boots which inflate and can expand and break off any ice that accumulates. The props and the windshields are also heated.

The extreme cold can affect a lot of things on planes, including batteries, hydraulics and fuel, which needs to be warmed before takeoff. The Twin Otter can fly in temperatures as low as -75 C.

Two additional fuel tanks are on the plane as well as survival gear and spare parts.

The crews are heading off to different assignments now that this one is in the books.

Dobchuk admits it was a relief to have the mission come to an end.

"You're kind of cruising along. You're in international airports and good weather all the way back. It's not that big of a deal from that point on.

"After that, it was sort of vacation time."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

WORKPLACE HEALTH

Enforce safety orders: Auditor

Alberta's auditor general says the provincial government is still not doing enough to enforce compliance with workplace safety orders.

Merwan Saher said the Labour Department has made some improvements since an audit six years ago identified problems with occupational health and safety rules, but it hasn't gone far enough.

"The department is unable to demonstrate, with evidence, that it has a complete set of processes to apply department policies to keep Alberta's workers safe," says the report released Tuesday.

Saher repeats a recommendation made in 2010 for the department to improve its planning and reporting.

He also repeated a suggestion that the department clarify and enforce rules it uses when it gives employers more time to fix worksite health and safety problems.

"Without adequate systems to enforce compliance with occupational health and safety legislation for those employers and workers who persistently fail to comply, the health and safety of workers continue to be exposed to otherwise avoidable risks."

The report says that if the recommendations are not followed, employers who fail to comply with orders may gain an unfair advantage over companies that spend time and resources to keep their worksites safe.

Labour Minister Christina Gray said the report shows the former Progressive Conservative government neglected workplace safety issues for years.

Gray said the NDP government will work to meet the recommendations in the auditor general's report.

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Calgary Transit users were surprised Tuesday with the brand new four-car CTrain. HELEN PIKE/ METRO

New CTrain cars Stampede ready

TRANSIT

The new S200 series design can hold 200 more per trip

Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

The elusive masked train has made its debut just in time for the Calgary Stampede rush.

On Tuesday morning, Calgary Transit launched its first four-car masked CTrain; the first four of 63 cars to go "in service."

"We're in the midst of the largest investment in public transit, by far, in Calgary's history," said Mayor Naheed Nenshi.

The Stampede, especially parade day, is one of Calgary Transit's busiest times. The new CTrain configuration carries up to 800 passengers per trip — 200 more passengers than the current CTrains.

Transportation boss Mac Logan said the launch of transit's S200 series is a milestone for the service, and something that's been a pet project for years.

Logan said the province's Green Trip program was "instrumental" in making the launch a reality, with each car ringing in at $3.2 million — purchased at a time when the Canadian dollar was stronger — for a cost savings of approximately $800,000 per car.

Michael Connolly, MLA for Calgary-Hawkwood was at the event in the place of Brian Mason, Minister of Transportation. He joked the design was probably closest to "the most Canadian thing ever," comparing the masked design to that of a hockey player.

"Unless you start giving every person who rides a free bowl of poutine, that's about as Canadian as you can get," said Connolly. "Today's launch is just one more step to improving public transit across the Calgary region."

Nenshi said the trains were a "big deal" for three reasons: reliability, passenger experience and capacity.

Of course, the mayor's favourite new feature is the flat benches without "butt imprints," among other bells and whistles.

"In particular, they look super cool," said Nenshi.

New trains will continue arriving into 2017, replacing 28 of the older U2 models, which have been in service for 34 years.

WEED CONTROL

Meet and bleat with city goats

The City of Calgary is smitten with its herd of 100 goats.

After a trial period, which wraps up July 10, the city has said the munching munchkins are "viable," proving environmentally friendly and cost-effective in their unique approach to invasive "plant management."

Translation: They're great at eating the weeds — particularly Canada thistle, hound's tongue, and hawkweed.

The city is hosting a meet and bleat this Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. You can meet the shepherd, her team and pet the animals.

Seriously, it's like the city has employed its own petting zoo complete with goats, puppies and horses.

"We now know that we can use goats in an active park without disrupting park visitors' enjoyment of the park, whether on foot, on bicycle, or with a leashed dog," said Chris Manderson, urban conservation lead for Calgary Parks.

Once the pilot is complete, the city will conduct a detailed project review and analysis, which will give them an idea of the opportunities and possibility of expanding the program to other parks.

Meet and greeters are asked to wear clean clothing and shoes, especially if they've had contact with other livestock.

Dogs should be left at home to help avoid stressing out the over-worked goats and herd dogs.

Parking is available at the Beddington Trail lot and signs will lead you to the goats.

HELEN PIKE/METRO

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5 THINGS MADE IN CALGARY WORTH CHECKING OUT

Travis Martin and Leighton Healey want to shine a spotlight on Calgary products with their logo campaign Made in Calgary. They're working on getting Made in Calgary stickers put on local products, so consumers the world-over know what was created by forward-thinking Calgarians.

Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

CONTRIBUTED

1 Midnight & Two

Luxury shaving products made using natural ingredients and 100 per cent pure, essential oils, handmade in Calgary. "Our ingredients are incredibly unique and sourced from around the world, resulting in a smooth, comfortable and irritation-free shave," said Tim Gutwald.

SPIRIT WEST

2 Spirit West Gear

Producing functional products for outdoor enthusiasts, Spirit West practises responsible local manufacturing using innovative design technologies. Founder Steve Bommer had sewn his own products, from expedition mitts to essential vests.

CONTRIBUTED

3 Routine Cream

"Routine Cream is an all-natural deodorant manufactured here in YYC. It's all natural, but it's also effective — it's kind of the first natural deodorant that has worked for many people. Kind of a breakthrough, life-changing thing for some people that need something effective, but don't want products with chemicals," said Neige Blair.

FACEBOOK

4 Wild Rose Brewery

Craft beer brewed with natural ingredients; Wild Rose has been sating the thirst of Calgarians since 1996. Only available in Alberta, the brewery released an anthology 12 pack in July featuring six different brands to satisfy varying palates.

5 Alberta Boot Co.

"We manufacture every pair of boots we sell right here. It's one of the only places I can think of where you actually walk into the store and you can see the factory behind there — everything's done under one roof," said Ben Gerwing.

CONTRIBUTED

Bobby Tulio says the Stoney Trail Mazda car dealership has greatly benefited by installing tents to protect cars from hail damage. JEREMY SIMES / FOR METRO

Dealership weathers hailstorms

WEATHER

Massive tents protect cars when warnings in effect

Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

Penny-sized hail can be just as big a nuisance as the golf-ball-sized menace, according to Bobby Tulio, general sales manager at Stoney Trail Mazda.

As hail pummelled much of Calgary over the past few days after severe weather warnings, the Mazda dealership managed to remain unscathed largely due to massive, sail-like tents and employee diligence.

The tents — with the most recent one being set up about a month ago — were installed as a result of insurance premiums that Tulio described as prohibitive.

"Insurance premiums only have one way to go — up," he said. "So we had to look for a practical solution."

Oft referred to as Hailstorm Alley, a swath of southern and central Alberta are frequently hit by damaging storms.

But, according to Tulio, smaller-sized hail can be extremely troubling for dealerships.

He said dealership workers found tiny little scratches and other blemishes when they inspected cars after they were smoked with bite-sized hail.

"It's happened more than I can count," Tulio said. "Once you point to one (damaged spot), it suddenly morphs. You look again and — boom — hail."

The tents the dealership installed came at a price of more than $500,000, Tulio said.

"I think in the short-term and in the long-term they're absolutely worth it," he said. "It benefits our company in being able to protect our inventory and it benefits clients because their cars are scratch-free."

All workers have to do, he said, is drive the cars into the tents anytime they suspect or know when severe weather warnings or watches are in effect.

"If the boys park the cars in the tent when there's a hail storm, we're good," Tulio said. "It's worth it even if you don't get hit again."

POLITICS

Kenney not the one to unite right: Smith

The woman who tried to unite Alberta's two right-of-centre parties says she'd still like to see the province's conservatives come together, but she's not convinced federal MP Jason Kenney is the guy to do it.

"It's going to be an uphill battle for him ... because of some of the positions that he has taken on conservative social issues in the past," said radio host and former politician Danielle Smith.

Two sources said that Kenney will announce Wednesday that he will seek the leadership of Alberta's Progressive Conservatives with the aim of merging the PCs and Opposition Wildrose.

Smith has some experience in that arena. In December 2014, she led a mass floor-crossing of Wildrose MLAs to the Tories who were headed by former premier Jim Prentice.

The PCs got clobbered in the May 2015 election. The NDP ended the party's more than four-decade run in government and the Wildrose retained official Opposition status.

Smith admits she failed to create a party that resonated with urban and rural voters alike.

Two former MLAs who followed Smith to the PCs — Rob Anderson and Bruce McAllister — are keen to see Alberta's right unite and believe Kenney is up to the task.

Anderson, who crossed from the Tories to the Wildrose and back again, said the ground is more fertile for a merger now than it was in 2014.

Political strategist Stephen Carter called the idea that a merged party under Kenney could win over voters "hilarious."

"(Alberta voters) don't want a hard-right alternative. If they did, they could have voted Wildrose in 2012. They could have voted for the Wildrose in 2015," said Carter.

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Next generation learning

THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

Entrepreneurs want to inspire Canadian teens to aim higher

Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

Navid and Nadeem Nathoo want to inspire Canadian kids to reach higher, and build a better future. AARON CHATHA / METRO

Calgary entrepreneur Navid Nathoo thinks Canadian kids don't have as much ambition as their American counterparts.

With his brother Nadeem, Nathoo is aiming to inspire the next generation to reach a little further, through a unique learning program inspired by the workflow of companies like Google and Facebook.

"When you ask a student what do you want to be when they grow up, in Calgary, they'll respond with an engineer at Suncor or maybe a lawyer. In Toronto, it might be I want to work at Goldman Sachs or consulting at McKinsey," Nathoo explained.

"But when you go to San Francisco and you ask a Stanford student, what do you want to be when you grow up, they say I want to build the next Google. Build the next electric car company. I want to be like Elon Musk."

> **When you ask a student what do you want to be when they grow up, in Calgary, they'll respond with an engineer at Suncor or maybe a lawyer.** Navid Nathoo

Nathoo has spent the last several years working out of San Francisco, and said there are many Canadian startups in the Silicon Valley — but not enough Canadians actually know about them.

The Knowledge Society, which launches its first program in August, targets kids from 13 to 17-years-old, exposing them to advanced topics like virtual reality, artificial intelligence, next generation cancer treatments and ultra poverty.

"We're helping these kids understand that you can do big things," Nathoo said. "We do that by exposing them to a variety of mentors from large companies like Facebook, Twitter and Goldman Sachs that are doing these big things."

It's not a traditional classroom — there are no teachers. Instead, kids work in teams tackling problems that don't even have solutions yet.

"Imagine walking into a space where there's a bunch of bean bag chairs, white boards, board games, snacks, drinks — an environment of learning where you're given a problem, and you and your team have to learn how to explore that problem and figure it out," Nathoo said.

They specifically target teens because they have a basic knowledge of technology, but haven't started university where they might be too far along in their program or career path to become invested in solving these big ideas.

The deadline for the first round of the program is on July 10.

For more information, visit theksociety.com.

HIGHLAND PARK

Council tables hearing

Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

It took council three tries, but a public hearing on a development planned for the former Highland Park Golf Course has been pushed to January 2017.

Mayor Naheed Nenshi pitched the delay because of other consultations that are set to take place, including a Green Line charette set for November.

The mayor's suggestion was initially rejected by council, but once Coun. Joe Magliocca heard from administration about an upcoming drainage study that could take 18 months, he asked to change his vote, triggering a reconsideration by council.

On that vote — the third of the day, the matter was successfully set over until January.

"This buys some time but it has to buy some time for real, thoughtful, honest engagement," said Nenshi.

Elise Bieche, president of the Highland Park Community Association, said the delay was satisfactory for the many Highland Park citizens who had turned out for the public hearing.

"I think the community has always been committed to working with the developer and working with the city to find a solution for this site," said Bieche.

"The community keeps saying over and over again, we're not opposed to the development of the golf course and we're not opposed to density — what we're seeking is quality planning."

Wildfire declared under control

FORT MCMURRAY

Firefighters battled inferno for over two months

Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

The Fort McMurray wildfire is now considered to be under control after crews have spent more than two months fighting the blaze that was initially detected on May 1.

On Tuesday, Alberta Wildfire thanked firefighters and partners for tackling a massive fire that forced more than 80,000 to flee Fort McMurray and neighbouring communities.

Laura Stewart, wildfire information officer with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, said the downgrade to "under control" marked a momentous day for firefighters and partners who have been battling the flames.

"It's a great day," Stewart said. "Our firefighters have been working hard for a long time."

Many Fort McMurray residents have since moved back into the city to rebuild their lives, some finding their homes destroyed while others received little damage.

Officials have said the wildfire destroyed about 10 per cent of the town, turning the communities of Beacon Hill, Waterways and Abasand into rubble.

Earlier this week, Fire Chief Darby Allen said many Fort McMurray firefighters are now wrestling with a different set of demons, battling emotions of guilt after some watched their own homes burn down.

Stewart said crews will enter the "extinguishment" phase, where they'll monitor for any potential hot spots and douse them if needed.

"Firefighters will continue to patrol and complete scans of the wildfire area, looking for any potential hotspots that pop up," she said.

She said crews aren't entirely sure when the entire extinguishment of the blaze will occur.

"But we just want to say thank you to our partners. It's been a lot of work for everyone."

The investigation into the cause of the wildfire is still ongoing.

If you're interested in following the Fort McMurray wildfire status in the province you can follow @AlbertaWildfire on Twitter.

Koda, shown in this handout image, was missing for 13 days.
COURTESY NATALIE GINGRAS

KODA

Neighbours find lost dog in culvert

Koda is one lucky dog.

Geri Skjersven was working outside in her flower bed at her home near Lac La Biche, Alta., on Sunday when she heard a whimpering noise.

"Something told me you better go look because this doesn't sound right. It's not the right whine or cry of a normal dog. It was a hurting cry."

She thought the sound was coming from behind the neighbour's house across the road.

"But as I was going through the ditch, it made the noise again, and I turned and noticed it was coming from the culvert."

Skjersven went back home, got a flashlight and returned to the culvert.

"I knelt down under there and I looked and I saw two little eyes looking at me and she was stuck there ... she was squished in there."

Koda, a big tan dog in the neighbourhood, had disappeared about two weeks earlier.

Skjersven and her husband, Ivan, own a company that does water and sewer work. They went into town to get their backhoe, called the gas company to mark the gas line and used the bucket to skim away the dirt.

They recognized Koda, so Skjersven went to get the owner. They then all worked together with hand shovels to remove part of the culvert.

Finally, Koda's owner was able to pull her out.

> **I saw two little eyes looking at me and she was stuck there.**
> Geri Skjersven

"She was in rough shape, shedding, skinny as ever, not a bark or whine. She looked pretty pathetic, very thin," Skjersven recalled Monday night.

"She'd been missing for 13 days as of Sunday and it looked like she'd been in that culvert that long."

They wrapped the muddy, wet dog in blankets and offered food. About 10 minutes later, Koda was eating.

The dog is being cared for by a vet and is doing well, although she will need surgery later to fix a hind leg.

"I'm glad it turned out well," said Skjerseven. "We were kind of worried it wasn't going to, but she's doing fine."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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NEWFOUNDLAND

'A big, big, big fish'

Jim Mansfield thought he'd hooked bottom as he fished for cod off Newfoundland — until his handline yanked back, and hard.

"Oh my God," he said of his "up close and personal" encounter early Saturday with the sharp-toothed maw of a two-metre porbeagle shark.

"Did it ever fight. I'd get it up probably six or eight feet with a really hard, hard struggle and then it would just tear the line right back through my hands again and go back down."

Mansfield was fishing off New Melbourne in Trinity Bay with his buddy Glenn Rideout when he hooked the shark in tough skin at the side of its mouth. A few great tugs from below led to a 20-minute skirmish as the two men worked to free it. They were in a small, open fishing boat with a motor. Their unexpected visitor had clamped on to an unbaited single red hook.

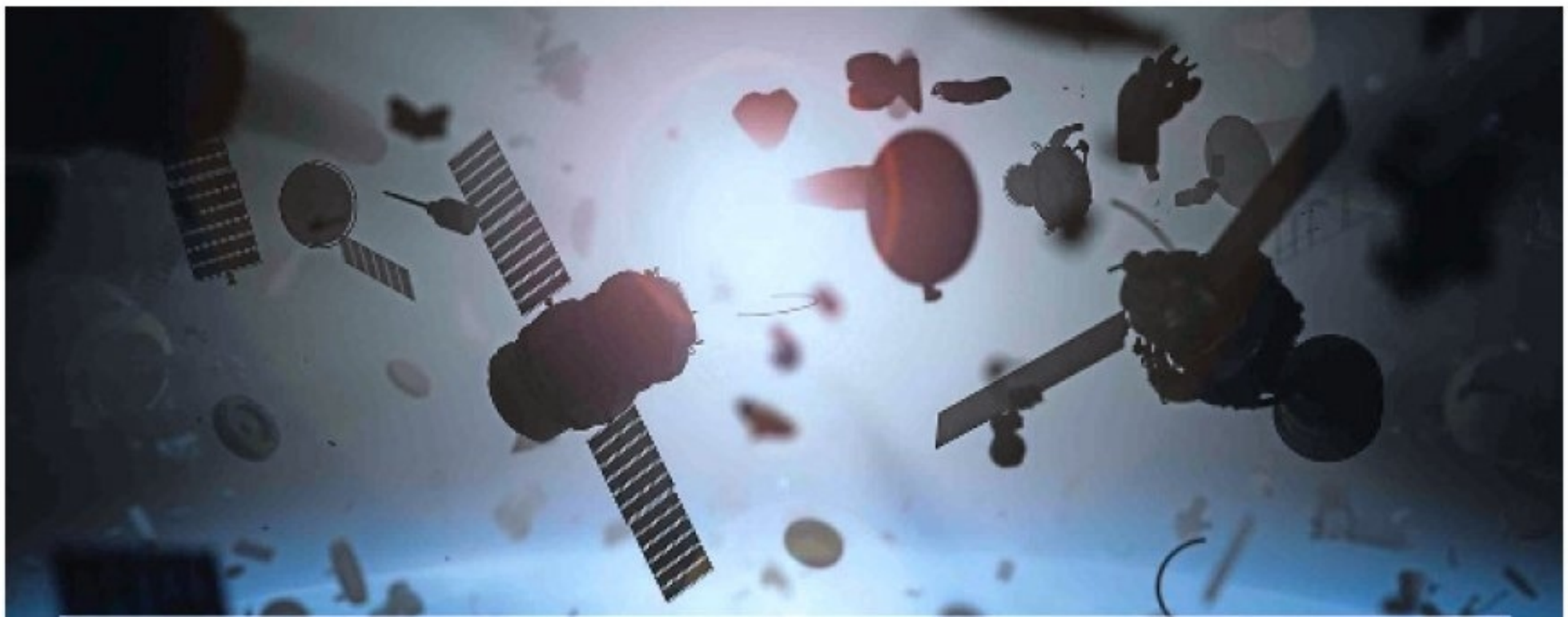
"He was a fat shark," Mansfield said Tuesday with a laugh. "It was a big, big, big fish."

The men and another man in a nearby boat managed to take a few pictures before they pulled the hook free and the shark swam off, unbloodied.

"I've often wondered what it would be like to catch one, you know?" Mansfield said.

Porbeagles are related to larger great whites and can reach up to about four metres in length and 135 kilograms. The Nature Canada website describes them as curious creatures and opportunistic hunters who will chase hooked fish as they're drawn to the surface. THE CANADIAN PRESS

A Newfoundland man hooked a two-metre shark while catching cod. HANDOUT



1 What is space debris? — Space debris is the junk left over from human missions to space. According to NASA, that includes derelict space craft and parts of launch vehicles, debris from spacecraft collisions, even tiny flecks of paint from spaceships.

2 How much is up there? — According to the Space Security Index, the U.S. has identified 16,000 pieces of debris larger than 10 cm in 2014. NASA estimated an additional 500,000 pieces of debris between one and 10 cm, with particles smaller than 1 cm accounting for more than 100 million pieces of debris.

3 How long does the junk stay up there? — It depends on where it is. According to NASA, the higher the altitude, the longer debris will remain in orbit. Debris within 600 km will fall back to Earth in a matter of years, while debris at an altitude of 800 km will take decades to fall back to Earth. Debris above 1,000 km, however, will remain in orbit for centuries.

ISTOCK

The hunk of junk in space

SECURITY

Weaponization of space tech is a concern for many

Canadian officials have "serious security concerns" over the increased presence of countries and private companies in the Earth's orbit, documents obtained by Torstar show.

Global Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion was warned in November that satellites enabling everything from telecommunications to national defence are facing a range of threats — from anti-satellite weaponry to pieces of junk floating around the planet.

"The viability of the space infrastructure is increasingly threatened by potential hostile acts from military or strategic opponents, space debris and space weather," state the documents, obtained under access to information law and stamped "secret."

"The challenge of protecting space infrastructure from both natural and man-made threats is compounded by the rapid expansion of both the number of space-faring nations and the uses to which space assets are put."

Department officials note that Canada is "highly dependent" on the network of satellites orbiting Earth for communications and surveillance, weather forecasting, search and rescue, and even urban planning.

The documents note during the Cold War, both the United States and the U.S.S.R. tested anti-satellite weaponry, with varying degrees of success. More recently, China in 2007 and the U.S. in 2008 achieved the capability to destroy satellites in what is called, low Earth orbit. According to NASA, low Earth orbit is 180 km to 2,000 km above the Earth's surface.

> **The private sector is increasingly commercializing outer space and performing activities traditionally undertaken by governments.**
> Documents obtained by Torstar

But it's not just nation states that are increasingly active in outer space. New hopes for commercializing space travel have emerged in recent years, including PayPal founder Elon Musk's SpaceX company and Amazon founder Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin.

According to the documents, Canadian officials are concerned about the "dual-use" nature of space technology — meaning tech that can be repurposed from its original intention to perform other, potentially dangerous functions.

Torstar requested an interview with Global Affairs for this article, but no one was available on Tuesday.

Paul Meyer, a fellow at Simon Fraser University who served in Canada's foreign service for more than three decades, said there appears to be a "revived interest" in the federal government to pursue space security issues.

"Canada used to be quite involved in issues relating to outer space," Meyer said in an interview Tuesday.

"More recently, (there's been) advocacy, active advocacy of the non-weaponization of outer space. This is a kind of key concept: yes, there are military uses in outer space, in terms of satellites that have military functions, but up to now it hasn't become a weaponized environment."

Meyer said when states talk about the "weaponization" of outer space, they're usually talking about weapons that can target other countries' satellites — not, say, some kind of superlaser that could be trained on planetary targets.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

HEALTH

Families with epileptic kids have marijuana treatment seized at border

Alex Repetski gives his daughter Gwenevere oil-based medical marijuana to help control her seizures. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Parents of children suffering from epilepsy say a recent move by Canadian border agents to seize shipments of medical marijuana oil from an American company could have a catastrophic effect on their children's health.

The families have sent letters to the federal government pleading for the border to allow shipments of Charlotte's Web, a type of marijuana oil that has been touted by some researchers as an effective therapy for hard-to-treat forms of epilepsy.

Charlotte's Web — named after a Colorado girl with epilepsy — has very low levels of the psychoactive ingredient tetrahydrocannabinol, but is high in cannabidiol, or CBD.

The families say they have been purchasing the oil from CW Hemp, a company based in Colorado, where marijuana was legalized in 2014. But the company notified the families late last month that it had stopped accepting Canadian orders after "a drastic" increase in the number of shipments seized at the border.

Canada Border Services Agency said it is simply enforcing the law because marijuana is still illegal in Canada.

Alex Repetski uses Charlotte's Web as part of the marijuana oil he concocts at home for his four-year-old daughter, Gwen, who lives with epilepsy that has left her developmentally delayed. He claims the treatment has allowed his daughter to live seizure free for 20 months, and has helped her learn to walk and talk.

The families have asked Health Canada for an exemption to allow shipments across the border.

Sylwia Krzyszton, a spokeswoman with Health Canada, said families can either turn to marijuana oil made in Canada or can apply for an exemption under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. THE CANADIAN PRESS

UNITED KINGDOM

Tories look for new leader

The race to succeed Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron intensified Tuesday as Britain grappled with growing signs of economic strain after the vote to leave the European Union.

With the British currency plunging to its lowest point in three decades, Home Secretary Theresa May scored a substantial victory in the first round of voting to determine who will follow Cameron as party leader and prime minister.

She garnered just over half the votes cast, with 165 Conservative Party members of Parliament backing her. Her strong showing does not guarantee she will eventually reside at 10 Downing Street, however, as lawmakers will narrow the field to two candidates and then put the matter to a vote before the entire party membership.

The victor, to be announced Sept. 9, will be charged with leading what are expected to be tense negotiations to extricate Britain from the 28-nation EU bloc.

May, who backed remaining in the EU, said she was pleased by the result in the vote.

"There is a big job before us: To unite our party and the country, to negotiate the best possible deal as we leave the EU, and to make Britain work for everyone," said May. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Theresa May, candidate for Conservative Party leadership. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Student at Canadian university still detained

BANGLADESH

Tahmid Hasib Khan being questioned by investigators

A student from the University of Toronto is still in police custody after surviving a hostage crisis and terrorist attack at a café in Bangladesh last weekend, his cousin told Torstar.

Tahmid Hasib Khan, 22, has been held at a police station in the capital Dhaka since he was detained for questioning more than 72 hours ago, when security forces stormed the Holey Artisan Bakery to end an 11-hour hostage crisis, Khan's cousin Rasheek Ishtahim said in an interview Tuesday.

While Khan has spoken with his parents by phone, no family has been allowed to see him, Ishtahim said. The family is calling on Ottawa to help clear Khan, a Canadian permanent resident, of any involvement in the attack in which 22 people were killed, 18 of them foreign nationals.

Daesh claimed responsibility for the attack and its media branch published grotesque photographs of attack victims, according to the monitoring group, SITE. The Bangladeshi government, however, has blamed Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, a domestic Islamist group. The home minister insisted Daesh has no presence in Bangladesh and could not have guided the attack.

"After such incidents usually people are taken to the hospital, but this wasn't the case," said Ishtahim, adding that his family does not know why Khan has been detained so long.

"I think the police might think he was a threat because he was of the same age," he said. "We are trying our best to get him out."

Tahmid Hasib Khan FACEBOOK

News reports from Bangladesh and across the globe named Khan as one of two hostages still being questioned after the café raid. Britain's Telegraph newspaper reported Tuesday that Khan was being detained along with British civil engineer Abul Hasanat Reza Karim. A police chief quoted in the report would not comment on the interrogations.

Canada's Global Affairs spokesperson Diana Khaddaj declined to answer questions about Khan on Tuesday. In an emailed statement, she said consular officials in Dhaka are monitoring the situation but have "no reports of a Canadian citizen affected or

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1 Dubai, UAE — A butcher prepares meat for customers ahead of Eid celebrations on Tuesday. GETTY IMAGES

2 Srinagar, Indian-controlled Kashmir — A baker walks with a tray of Eid pastries for sale. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

3 Yogyakarta, Indonesia — Children parade on streets to celebrate Eid Al-Fitr marking the end of Ramadan. GETTY IMAGES

U.S. ELECTION

No charges for Clinton in email scandal

The FBI lifted a major legal threat to Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign Tuesday, recommending no criminal charges for her handling of highly classified material in a private email account. But Director James Comey's scathing criticism of her "extremely careless" behaviour revitalized Republican attacks and guaranteed the issue will continue to dog her.

Comey's announcement effectively removed any possibility of criminal prosecution arising from Clinton's email practices as President Barack Obama's secretary of state. Attorney General Loretta Lynch said last week that she intended to accept the recommendations of the FBI and of career prosecutors.

But the FBI director's blistering televised statement excoriated her handling of national secrets, contradicted her past explanations about her emails and ensured she will remain on the defensive about voters' views of her trustworthiness and judgment.

Hillary Clinton GETTY IMAGES

GOP presidential candidate Donald Trump said the statement provided more evidence against "Crooked Hillary" and showed anew that "the system is rigged." Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan said the decision not to prosecute simply defied explanation.

The findings concluded a year-long investigation into whether Clinton mishandled classified information, either intentionally or negligently. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TERRORISM

Suicide attacks bear Daesh hallmarks

The government minister largely responsible for security in Baghdad submitted his resignation Tuesday, two days after one of the biggest bombings in more than a decade of war and insurgency killed 175 people as the Muslim holy month of Ramadan came to an especially bloody conclusion.

In addition to the violence in Baghdad, the final week of Ramadan saw suicide attackers strike near one of Islam's holiest sites in Saudi Arabia, in an upscale neighbourhood of the capital of Bangladesh, and at the international airport in Turkey's commercial hub of Istanbul.

The series of attacks, which bore the hallmarks of Daesh, killed both Muslims and non-Muslims, but also highlighted the reach of the militants beyond Iraq and Syria. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Firms looking for mail alternatives

POSTAL STOPPAGE

Canada Post rivals plan for boom as lockout looms

Many Canadian businesses that rely on mail orders have been scrambling for weeks to prepare for a potential delivery shutdown at Canada Post.

The Crown corporation said Tuesday it had issued a 72-hour lockout notice to the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), raising the spectre of a work stoppage by Friday.

The parcel delivery business has been a major contributor to Canada Post's revenues in the past few years, with volumes growing by 10 per cent in 2015 year-over-year.

Many of those deliveries are from e-commerce businesses that have been forced to make alternative plans to deliver their goods to customers. They're also worried about the long-term costs of doing so if a work stoppage drags on.

"I think I've definitely seen a few more grey hairs this week than normal," said Suneal Pabari, co-founder of coffee subscription service The Roaster's Pack, which is "incredibly dependent" on Canada Post.

The company has been trying for weeks to work out a plan with alternative shippers. Pabari said the rates they've been quoted are 50 to 100 per cent more than what they were paying with Canada Post.

> **I've definitely seen a few more grey hairs this week.**
> Suneal Pabari

Erin Maynes, CEO of food box delivery service FoodiePages.ca, is similarly worried about the decision to switch to more expensive couriers — especially for those orders going to more remote areas where Canada Post offers the best rates.

Canopy Growth Corp., the company that owns licensed medical marijuana producers Tweed and Bedrocan, has implemented a contingency plan so that patients can continue to get their prescriptions filled. Health Canada's rules state that medical marijuana can only be delivered through the mail, so many companies are dependent on Canada Post.

Competitor delivery services are planning for a boom in business. UPS said Tuesday it has already seen an increase in business and that it is ready to take on even more.

At Good Foot Delivery, a Greater Toronto Area public transit-based service, a potential work stoppage is a mixed blessing, said operations coordinator Courtney Ayukawa. While it could mean an increase in delivery time because the couriers rely on Canada Post for delivery legs outside the Toronto area, she is also expecting an increase in business.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A postal worker delivers mail in Ottawa on Tuesday as a labour dispute between the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and Canada Post continues. JUSTIN TANG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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DATING WEBSITE

Ashley Madison is getting a makeover under new leaders

Ashley Madison, the infidelity dating company that was hit last year by a massive hack, now hopes that a more inclusive, female-friendly site — and new leadership — will help it woo new customers.

The Toronto-based company's planned makeover is part of a broader strategy to rebuild the business that was left in shambles after last summer's security breach, which exposed the personal dealings and financial information of millions of purported clients.

"In 2016, the world is vastly different than it was in 2010," said parent company Avid Life Media's new CEO, Rob Segal. The company found that roughly 45 per cent of Ashley Madison users are single and the balance were "looking for other experiences and other types of things" besides the infidelity trumpeted under the previous regime, including polyamory, he said. He gave few details about how it aims to appeal to women.

Avid is also looking to purchase other dating sites in an effort to expand, said the company's new president, James Millership. The company has invested millions in security over the past year, hiring Deloitte to monitor its systems around the clock and striving to achieve the top level of Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard compliance, a benchmark Millership said only a handful of dating sites have reached.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

SURVIVAL

- Avid Life Media's founder and former CEO Noel Biderman left last August in the wake of the cyberattack — which raised questions about whether the company would be able to survive.
- The cyberattack cost Avid about a quarter of its annual revenue.

TECHNOLOGY

iPhone users urged to become organ donors

Apple wants to encourage millions of iPhone owners to register as organ donors through a software update that will add an easy sign-up button to the health information app that comes installed on every smartphone the company makes.

CEO Tim Cook says he hopes the new software will help ease a longstanding donor shortage.

He told The Associated Press that the problem hit home when Apple co-founder Steve Jobs endured an "excruciating" wait for a liver transplant in 2009.

Apple is adding the option to enrol in a national donor registry by clicking a button within the iPhone's Health app, which can be used manage a variety of health and fitness data.

The software will come to all U.S.-based iPhones when the company updates its mobile operating system this fall.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Wednesday, July 6, 2016

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
ON QUESTIONS NO ONE'S ASKING MOMS

Obscured beneath predictable, vapid chatter about baby weight are questions I would desperately like to ask new mothers

There's a certain societal assumption that women with babies aren't very interesting.

Useful, perhaps, in a zookeeper kind of way. But not so much intellectually stimulating. Having revealed themselves to be the owner of a working uterus, they tend to be thought of only as a uterus, or perhaps a being transformed by virtue of her uterus into a slave finely tuned to the rhythms of eating, sleeping and soiling.

Unless, of course, they're a celebrity.

In that case, they become very interesting on one particular point: How did she lose the baby weight!?!?!

I will admit that watching a wealthy woman yo-yo in size from spherical to cylindrical does raise the question. But it's very, very, very easily answered. Like anybody who loses any weight, ever, women lose baby weight via a combination of diet, exercise and God-like force of will. (I guess some might get surgery. Probably some do.)

But it's actually always the exact same story, with a few rotating details that obscure the likely use of starvation. And as a slice of self-help advice, it's a story completely devoid of usefulness to most women who are too busy working and child-rearing to work out eight hours a day, and too poor to pay for a personal chef and personal trainer/baby-weight-loss enforcer, plus a Kim K-endorsed corset.

What is glorious? What is brutal? Tell me every detail that blows away the large, grey fog of 'it's all worth it.'

There's nothing wrong with wanting to fit your wardrobe from nine months ago, obviously, especially if it's full of clothes you actually like. Having never given over my body to the growth and needs of an alien being, I clearly can't relate to the havoc that experience wreaks on far more than waistlines.

But headlining new-mom stories with baby-weight woes is a simple, retrograde way to suggest the only priority for new mothers is to be damn hot. As if they could assert their old independence by looking as they once did, and so we never need ask more about the earthquake that is parenthood.

Worse is this: Obscured beneath that inane, predictable, vapid chatter are myriad questions I would desperately like to ask new mothers.

Enter "Mother, Writer, Monster, Maid" by Rufi Thorpe. The essay, which was published by Vela, an online magazine of writing by women tumbled down my Twitter feed not far behind a CBC News tweet about the model Molly Sims and — you guessed it — her baby weight.

Thorpe's story doesn't mention calorie counting. It's far more devastating than bootcamp regimes. It reads like a kind of wail from a woman who both loves her children and feels imprisoned by them.

"There is a deep, almost suffocating solitude to my days, and yet there is also the California ocean, the flowers, the breeze. It is lovely; it is intolerable; it is both," Thorpe writes.

"I have tried to say it to my husband; I have tried to say, 'I hate my life.' I have tried to say, 'I need help.' I have tried to explain why I am finding being a mother so difficult, but in the face of his questions, my explanations collapse," she goes on. As a writer who's hoping to one day have children, and who's utterly terrified of what that will mean, this is what I want to hear from mothers. What is glorious? What is brutal?

In her essay, Thorpe notes a series of recent articles "that argue that there is an inherent conflict between motherhood and artistic work," an argument at which many creative mothers may or may not bristle. An argument that seems hyperbolic, and exactly the kind of dialogue I am seeking.

Thorpe's essay has an uplifting ending, but that's almost beside the point. Indelicate questions have been asked, by one mother, of herself, and there's nothing self-help about it.

It's only one view, but it's more illuminating than decades of tabloid talk. A single window into motherhood, sans dress size.

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW Please, please, Kim, tell us how you managed to lose the all-important baby weight. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wage increase will show service workers respect they deserve

Graham Sucha

Before I was elected, I worked in the restaurant business for half my life, and was a manager for nearly a decade.

I took pride in my ability to lower turnover rates, which are a big problem in the industry. I did this by addressing the underlying reasons: working conditions, respect, recognition, training and inclusion in decision making. I can remember countless times when one of my servers would come off the floor looking and feeling dejected after being treated with no respect by the people at their table. I made it a habit to watch for those signs. All it took from me was a quick word of appreciation to let them know that they were doing a good job, and their backs would straighten, the smile would come back out and the productivity would go up. I was glad to do it. I owed my success to these people.

We don't place a lot of value on the service industry. And this is reflected in how service workers are paid.

As a society we don't place a lot of value on the service industry. Sit two people down at the bar, and if one of them says they work in oil-and-gas sector and the other says they work in restaurants, the first one is going to get more respect. And this is reflected in how service workers are paid. Beyond the obvious benefits of raising the minimum wage — to the workers themselves, their families, the local businesses where they spend their money and the social services that they will no longer need — I can see one huge benefit for the service industry itself: Workers will be more valued — by themselves, by their employers and by the people who rely every day on their work.

And it is hard work. Have no doubt about it. People who serve in restaurants and bars work long, hard hours and they deserve a fair wage for it. I am happy to support the drive to give them what they deserve, because I owe it to them.

I have seen many restaurants come and go. It happened before the minimum-wage increase and it will happen after. And it was never because of the rates of pay (in fact, the ones who shut down usually offered the worst rates). It was because of a failure to adapt to changing trends and changing markets.

The restaurant industry has seen all sorts of cost increases and has continued to thrive. It will continue with an increase in minimum wage.

Graham Sucha is the MLA for Calgary-Shaw

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STARS SPEAKING OUT

Duelling petitions on Jesse Williams: After his BET Awards speech criticized police in America, one petition calls for the Grey's Anatomy star to be fired, another supports Williams, calling him "a brave leader."

Can you be kinda-sorta vegan?

LIFESTYLE

A look at plant-based diets leads to a lesson in labels

Genna Buck
Metro Canada

People come into Kupfert & Kim, a vegan take-out joint with six locations around Toronto, for all sorts of reasons.

Some are looking for a substantial lunch that's healthier than typical fast-food fare, while others are seeking lactose- and gluten-free options, said staff member Jesus Rodriguez. But most have one thing in common, he added: They don't call themselves vegan.

All the items on the restaurant's menu are free of meat, fish and animal by-products like milk, butter and eggs — what's conventionally understood to be vegan.

But almost everyone who was at the busy downtown location on Tuesday at lunchtime said they didn't identify with any dietary label at all. Just two were vegetarian.

The customers were "vegan" that day only incidentally or occasionally. Their reasons for choosing an animal-free lunch or snack ranged from, "It's really fresh and really good," as one woman grabbing a blueberry smoothie said, to, in the case of customer Jeff Mcleod, simply because he really likes the coffee.

DEFINITIONS

Vegan Someone who abstains from foods made from animals or animal by-products like dairy, eggs and honey. Many vegans say veganism extends beyond diet to a lifestyle and philosophy that aims to minimize animal suffering in every way.

Plant-based diet Broadly, this could refer to anyone who mostly eats foods that come from plants. But more recently, "plant-based" has come to refer to people who follow a diet identical to what vegans eat, but who don't choose to adopt the broader philosophy of veganism.

Fruitarian An extreme vegan who follows a high-carbohydrate, low-fat, low-protein diet consisting almost entirely of fruit. This is discouraged by doctors and dieticians.

Staff member Jesus Rodriguez shows off some vegan fare available at Toronto's Kupfert & Kim. LIZ BEDDALL/METRO

In the eyes of many self-identified vegans, there's absolutely no such thing as an occasional vegan.

"An occasional vegan … that's like … let me think … that's like saying you're an occasional Buddhist," said Toronto-based life coach Kimberly Carroll, who has been vegan for 10 years. "Veganism is a philosophy. It's about eliminating harm to animals as much as possible. It goes beyond diet."

Carroll doesn't wear silk (from caterpillars), fur, wool or leather, and doesn't go anywhere animals are used for entertainment, like zoos or aquariums.

"I did stomp on a centipede once. I felt bad about it.

Kimberly Carroll has been a vegan for 10 years, and she aims to reduce animal suffering in every aspect of her life

Within the vegan community, the term "plant-based diet" is more commonly used to describe the choice to abstain from all animal products, but not identify with the vegan lifestyle, Carroll explained. (Confusingly, many people who eat animal products once in a while, but are mostly vegan or vegetarian, also say they follow a "plant-based diet.")

The precise definitions of all these terms, it turns out, are hotly contested.

Oakville, Ont. food writer Angela Liddon learned that the hard way last year.

She cooks vegan meals for her family and features them her site, Oh She Glows. But her husband isn't a vegan, and, she explained in a blog post, her infant daughter Adriana won't necessarily be either.

In response to the reader question, "Will you raise your daughter a vegan?" she wrote, "I want her to be able to try any food that she wants to, including the food her dad and family members eat," whether it's vegan or animal-based.

What followed was a deluge of "hateful and threatening" comments accusing her of being not vegan enough and not doing for the vegan movement, Liddon wrote in a follow-up post.

The experience scared her off the word "vegan" altogether.

"I will keep on doing my thing, but without a personal label on my diet or lifestyle," she wrote, adding she plans to continue sharing the same kinds of "crowd-pleasing, plant-based recipes."

Judgemental attitudes, like what Liddon experienced, are troubling to Sandra Veljovic, incoming president of the Veg Club at the University of Toronto. Though she's a strict vegan herself, Veljovic said being militant about labels "makes us seem a lot less accessible and perpetuates the stereotype of vegans being super extreme."

No one is 100 per cent successful at being vegan, Carroll said, because it's nigh on impossible to go through life without causing any animal suffering at all.

Case in point: "I did stomp on a centipede once," she confessed. "I felt bad about it."

Although she is extremely conscientious personally, Carroll wants as many people as possible to identify with and feel welcome to join the vegan and vegetarian movements, even if their adherence is not perfectly pure.

"The more folks identify as vegans, the better for vegans," she said, because it will expand the vegan options available and reduce the amount of animal products used. Ultimately she said, "I want animals to not suffer."

SPECIAL EDITIONS

Snacks not worth crossing the border for

Ariel Teplitsky
Torstar News Service

I've got a theory: Oreo regularly introduces unusual flavours, from Strawberry Shortcake to Banana Split, to make us better appreciate the original. It's the New Coke approach to marketing. That cola was so widely detested, it gave a huge boost in sales to the original when "Classic Coke" was reintroduced.

Still, that doesn't explain the sheer number of Oreo cookie varieties that have been developed around the world, from fruit punch to green tea to cookie dough.

It used to be so simple, with little choice beyond the original and the "Double Stuf" cookies — and even the latter proved you couldn't improve on the source. Double Stuf is too much stuf.

In Canada, we are still relatively deprived of exotic Oreo flavours, so on a recent trip down south I stocked up on four kinds: Red Velvet, S'mores, Fruity Crisp and Reese's Peanut Butter Cup Oreos.

And how are they? For the most part, Canadians aren't missing out. The Red Velvet has a "cream cheese" filling but it contains no dairy, so the taste is overly artificial. The stuffing in the Fruity Crisp is filled with bits of sweet cereal (similar to Froot Loops) and with my first bite I thought this was an inspired triumph of sugary snack food science, but with my second bite I wasn't so sure, and by the third I was beginning to regret ever putting this fake-fruit concoction in my mouth. I swear the aftertaste lingered for at least an hour afterward.

The food alchemists had better success fusing Oreo with S'mores — though why didn't they call them S'moreos? Seems like a missed opportunity. The right flavours are there, all of them a bit too sweet, and I wanted the stuffing to have more of a marshmallow consistency.

And last, the Reese's Peanut Butter Cup Oreos, which happens to be the greatest of the bunch. By fusing the two familiar confections, they've created something exciting and new — I would prefer to eat these over conventional Oreos and Reese's.

Some Oreo flavours you can't get in Canada. TORSTAR NEW SERVICE

After the fast ... it's time for the feast

RECIPE

End of Ramadan opens the door to the dessert delights of Eid

Sawine (left) is a Trinidadian dessert of buttery toasted vermicelli cooked in sweet milk then topped with nuts and dried fruit while **Kahk** is a very old dessert eaten by Egyptians during Eid. KARON LIU/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

As Ramadan comes to an end, Muslims are celebrating Eid al-Fitar, a day of feasting following a month of fasts. As with any global holiday, the treats vary from place to place. The Somalis have buskud (shortbread); Pakistanis make sheer khurma (vermicelli cooked in sweet milk); and the Turkish and Bosnians bake baklava.

Here's a glimpse into some other home-made Eid treats Canadians are digging into this week.

Trinidadian Sawine
(Makes 8 to 10 servings)

Muslims in Trinidad and Tobago make up just about 10 per cent of the population, but Eid is a public holiday and families take the day off to don new clothes, visit the mosque (Trinidad has 85 and Tobago has two) and cook up a storm, says Lazina Aziz, 77, who was born in Trinidad before coming to Canada 20 years ago. Aziz makes a sweet puddinglike dessert called sawine (pronounced "sa-wine"). Thin vermicelli noodles are toasted to a golden brown in butter, then cooked in sweetened milk flavoured with spices, nuts, dried fruit and other toppings.

Ingredients:
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) cut vermicelli
- 1 cinnamon stick or 1 tsp (5 mL) ground cinnamon
- 6 whole green cardamon pods
- 2 cups (500 mL) each: boiling water, evaporated milk
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) sweetened condensed milk
- Raisins, for garnish
- Chopped toasted almonds, for garnish

Directions:
1. In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add vermicelli, cinnamon and cardamon. Stir constantly, covering noodles in butter and toasting until fragrant, about 2 to 3 minutes. Remove cinnamon stick and cardamon pods.

2. Add boiling water; continue to cook on medium until noodles are tender and most of the water has evaporated, about 10 to 15 minutes.

3. Reduce heat to low. Stir in evaporated and condensed milks until warm.

4. Divide into bowls. Top with raisins and chopped almonds. Serve immediately.

Egyptian Kahk
(Makes 36 cookies)

In Egypt, the essential dessert for Eid is kahk (pronounced "ka-hk" with a strong emphasis on the H), a crumbly cookie stuffed with a sweet paste and covered in powdered sugar.
"My grandma would spend hours kneading the dough, but this was before the days of the KitchenAid," says Nora Hindy, 33, a teacher.

Ingredients (for the walnut filling):
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) each: water, all-purpose flour, honey, toasted sesame seeds
- 3/4 cup (180 mL) crushed and toasted walnuts
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) rosewater, optional

Directions:
1. In a small pan over very low heat, whisk water, flour and honey together until well incorporated and smooth. Fold in sesame seeds and walnuts; stir in rosewater if using. Remove from heat.

2. Let mixture cool to room temperature to form a paste.

Ingredients (for the dough):
- 4 cups (1 L) all-purpose flour
- 1 1/4 cups (310 mL) ghee or clarified butter
- 2 tsp (10 mL) powdered sugar, plus more for dusting cookies
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) ground mahaleb
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) each: ground aniseed, ground fennel seed
- 1 1/2 tbsp (2 packets) instant dry active yeast
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) lukewarm water
- Walnut filling

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 375F (190C). In a stand mixer with hook attachment, mix flour and ghee on low speed until dough is evenly mixed but still crumbly.

2. In the meantime, in a mixing bowl stir together sugar, mahaleb, aniseed, fennel seed and yeast. Add water and mix until yeast starts to bubble. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit for 10 minutes, or until mixture doubles in size.

3. Add yeast mixture to flour mixture. Mix dough on low speed until just combined into a solid ball. Add more water if dough is too dry.

4. Divide dough into tablespoon-sized balls. Take dough ball and flatten into a disc shape with hand. Scoop 1 teaspoon of walnut filling into centre of flattened dough ball. Roll dough back into a ball. Repeat with remaining dough.

5. Place dough on lined baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes, or until cookies are slightly golden brown.

6. Let cool on a rack; dust generously with powdered sugar.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

ROSE REISMAN THE SAVVY EATER

THIS WEEK: Canned Tuna

A tuna fish sandwich is an easy meal, but the flavoured versions may not be as nutritious.

PICK THIS

Solid White Tuna (Albacore in Water)

Calories 70
Fat 1g
Sodium 170mg

SKIP THIS

Mini Flaked Light Spicy Thai Tuna

Calories 160
Fat 7g
Sodium 470mg

HERE'S WHY

Equivalent to: as much sodium as two slices of Primo Vegetarian Pizzas (hand-tossed crust) from Panago Pizza.

Canned tuna is an easy way to make a meal. While there may not seem to be much of a difference between these two cans, take a closer look. By selecting the Spicy version, you're adding sunflower oil, sugar and extra salt, which more than doubles the calories and sodium, as well as greatly magnifying the fat. Pick the tuna packed with water; you can add some light mayonnaise, diced veggies and herbs to enhance the flavour.

Add slices of heirloom tomatoes to your pizza for a summery, light pie tonight. KARON LIU/TORONTO STAR

PIZZA

Better than takeout

Simply brush a store-bought, thin pizza crust with olive oil and lay a single layer of sliced heirlooms, added stripes of prosciutto, minced garlic, basil leaves, crumbled feta, salt and pepper. It's filling, light-tasting and ready in 20 minutes from start to finish.

Heirloom Tomato Pizza
Makes one pizza.

Ingredients:
- 1 store-bought, ready-made thin pizza crust
- Olive oil
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 to 2 medium heirloom tomatoes, thinly sliced
- 3 to 4 slices prosciutto
- Freshly torn basil leaves
- 1 tbsp crumbled feta
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425 F (220 C) or temperature indicated on pizza instructions.

2. Rub garlic clove all over pizza crust. Lightly brush crust with olive oil. Mince garlic clove and sprinkle evenly over crust.

3. Arrange sliced tomatoes in a single layer around crust. Top with prosciutto, basil and feta. Brush more oil. Season with salt and pepper.

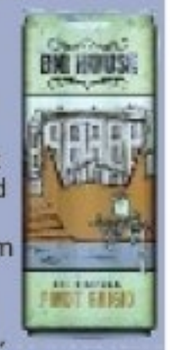
4. Place pizza directly on the middle rack of the oven; bake 10 to 12 minutes, or until prosciutto and tomato edges begin to crisp and brown. Remove from oven and serve. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

LIQUID ASSETS

Can wine work like this?

As adventurous as wine fans can be, there are still some hurdles many just won't jump. The most contentious is packaging.

While the convenience of bag-in-box wines have seen even the snobbiest of wine snobs embrace the concept; wine from a PET bottle or Tetra Pak never turned anyone's corkscrew.



Though not the first to take a kick at the can, California's Big House has just released two wines that come wrapped in aluminum.

Straight from the can The Birdman Pinot Grigio (250mL, $3.99-$4.99) is a surprisingly full-figured white with ripe, citrus fruit, while the Cardinal Zin Zinfandel (250mL, $3.99-$4.99) is a red packed with blackberry and plum. Easy to transport and simple to serve, both should be a hit at any summer gathering. PETER ROCKWELL

Tackling technology ... and Tuscany

INTERVIEW

Debi Mazar's keeping calm with so many pots on the boil

Debi Mazar lends her voice and recipes to OK Soy Vay, an interactive voice-activated recipe website. AMY SUSSMAN/INVISION

Debi Mazar and her brood spend at least a month in Tuscany each year, but if the Younger actress had her way, the region would be a far more permanent fixture in her life.

"If I didn't have children in American schools, I would leave tomorrow," the New Yorker says.

While the charms of the Italian region are obvious, it's more personal for Mazar: It's where she met her husband, chef Gabriele Corcos, the inspiration for the couple's Brooklyn restaurant, Under the Tuscan Gun, and where they hope to open a culinary school and bed and breakfast.

The couple's dreams are an extension of the success they've had as a culinary couple. Their Cooking Channel show, Extra Virgin, in which the entire family played comedic supporting roles to whatever dish was the star for that episode, gave Mazar a new identity outside of her acting one. She hopes to expand that with a lifestyle brand, and more recently, she became a spokeswoman for cooking vinaigrette Soy Vay's talking recipes on its website.

But Mazar remains committed to her acting career, noting it will always be her first love and career priority. Season three of the sitcom Younger debuts in September on TV Land. She talked about cooking in a recent interview.

Do you like to use a lot of tech stuff in the kitchen?

No, I don't use any tech stuff in the kitchen. I know how to cook. But the difference is ... I like to use tech stuff every place else. I have one good knife that I love ... I have a cutting board. I like to use my hands a lot. I also like to use cookbooks. When I cook a recipe of Cuban Ropa Vieja, I feel like I'm going on vacation.

Extra Virgin ran for six years. What's next for you and your husband in front of the camera?

We are in the middle of writing again, and we are about to go out and sell a new show. We're also trying to open up a bread and breakfast in Italy and a cooking school. We have the property so we're working on that, so we have a lot of irons in the fire. ... We're nurturing and just growing everything from the ground up. It's very much the natural progression of our brand. Nothing is forced, it's what we believe and it's what we live, and we're trying to be true to what we like and want to share with people.

How will the new cooking show be different?

That I can't tell you, because it's not here yet, but it won't be the same thing as before, and we're still in the process of kind of figuring that out ourselves, but we have a couple of ideas. ... I created the format for the Cooking Channel; it had never been done before, a docu-show. It wasn't reality, it was completely scripted, completely created in the sense that you weren't seeing my personal business. You were seeing parts of my life, but there were no fights, no meltdowns; the food was the star, not me.

Did your daughters (Evelina, 14, and Giulia, 10) enjoy it?

They were young when they started. I think it was really natural. Giulia, she loves being on camera, the other one loves to be a food critic and taste. Whether or not they're going to be included in my next round of food or entertainment remains to be seen.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

Helping towns on the ropes stand up again

THE SHOW: Still Standing, Season 2, Episode 3 (CBC)
THE MOMENT: The Titanic joke

Still Standing has Jonny Harris entertaining struggling towns. CONTRIBUTED

Series host Jonny Harris is on stage in Georgetown, PEI. The town is struggling: The timber mill closed in 2007, the shipyard three years later. Harris has been interviewing locals, and he incorporates their stories into his standup routine.

"There were 15 bars here once; now there are none," Harris says. "There were 1,600 people, now there are 650. Proving a direct correlation between alcohol and population." The audience chuckles.

Harris introduces a local who wants pocket cruise ships to stop here. "A pocket cruiser would help," Harris says. "Heck, a canoe would help. Jack and Rose from Titanic clinging to a piece of debris would help — as long as when you fished them out they'd go buy an ice cream."

The premise here could not be simpler: Harris arrives in a town beset by adversity, bones up on the history, tapes a few chats. Then he sets up a stage with a map of Canada and a few strings of lights, and delivers his routine — equal parts ribbing, education and boosterism.

The enterprise feels like exactly what the CBC should be doing. That's not usually good news — it smacks of taking your medicine. But Still Standing works. Harris and his subjects react to one another with good-natured charm, while the seriousness of the towns' plights makes humour feel like a brave choice.

Props to Harris: He hears the same hard tale in every small town — the end of fishing and lumber gutted them — yet finds fresh jokes every time.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

SWEDEN

Dozens report assault at fests

Several dozen women reported being raped or sexually assaulted at two music festivals in Sweden last weekend, police said Tuesday.

Police Inspector Leif Nystrom said there had been 32 reports of attacks by boys or young men at a three-day festival in the city of Karlstad, 300 kilometres west of the capital, Stockholm. The youngest alleged victim was 12. Police identified seven young men they wanted to question.

Meanwhile in Norrkoping, police told local media that they that were investigating five cases of alleged rape and more than a dozen suspected sexual assaults at the Bravalla Festival in the city, southwest of Stockholm.

After playing in Norrkoping, British rock band Mumford & Sons posted a note on their Facebook site saying they were "appalled ... and gutted by these reports" of rape and sexual assault.

The band said Tuesday they would not play Bravalla again unless police and organizers could assure them that they are "doing something to combat what appears to be a disgustingly high rate of reported sexual violence."

A police officer helps with security in the campsite at Bravalla Festival in Norrkoping, Sweden Saturday. IZABELLE NORDFJELL / TT VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven described the situation as "totally unacceptable" and said that laws on sexual assault would be tightened.

"We are in the process of reviewing them," he said in a speech at a political seminar. "It's also important that we continue to ensure that police, prosecutors and other officials are better equipped to investigate such crimes and actually catch the perpetrators."

Nystrom told The Associated Press that Karlstad police have identified the perpetrators at the event in Karlstad but that no one had yet been detained. He declined to give details of the suspects or comment on reports that the offences were committed by migrants or foreigners, pending the outcome of the investigation.

He said the reports of sexual assault in Karlstad included groping but there were no reports of rape or attempted rape.

"We want to catch the suspects because we need to talk to them," he said. "The number of such cases has increased slightly since last year, but I'm really not sure if this is a common problem at festivals."

Earlier this year, Swedish police faced allegations of a cover-up for failing to inform the public of widespread sexual assaults against teenage girls at a music festival a year ago, which came to light in January when the Swedish daily Dagens Nyheter reported them following a string of sexual assaults and robberies on New Year's Eve in Cologne, Germany.

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Frugal Focus rewards steady drivers

ALL PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

REVIEW

Fun to drive in medium to slow traffic

Sami Haj-Assaad
AutoGuide.com

Ford is sticking all kinds of EcoBoost engines into its compact cars, but this one isn't the hairy, rally-inspired Focus RS you've heard all about, and it's certainly not the tail-happy Focus ST that lights up the track.

While those two turbocharged versions of the Focus are all about speed, the one I'm testing is the polar opposite. With its force-fed three-cylinder engine, you need to take it slow and steady. And if you drive this car slow and steady, it will reward the driver with extra miles per gallon.

Ford and the EPA suggest that the best the 1.0-litre EcoBoost can do in the Focus is a whopping 35 mpg. It might not be as exciting as what the Focus RS and Focus ST can do, but for some people, this frugalness can be a thrill in its own right.

First seen in the U.S. on the Fiesta, the engine makes 123 hp and 125 lb-ft of torque and is paired to a six-speed transmission, either an automatic or a manual. Manual models are capable of getting 35 mpg combined, while automatics earn just 32 mpg combined. Automatic start-stop helps improve things in traffic. Canadians get both the sedan and hatchback body styles.

The car feels pretty responsive in the mid-range, making it surprisingly fun to drive in slow to medium-speed traffic. Ask much more of it, say, passing on the highway, and you're going to be wanting more power and for it to arrive much sooner. And while you can jump through traffic lights with a bit of gusto, doing so comes at the cost of fuel economy. This 1.0-litre EcoBoost needs you to take things a bit slowly. Simply put, the power plant is only suitable for staying right at the speed limit and driving gingerly and smoothly.

Despite the requirement to be driven sedately, the car is quite fun and responsive to drive. The steering feels tight and well weighted, giving a confident feel to the driver.

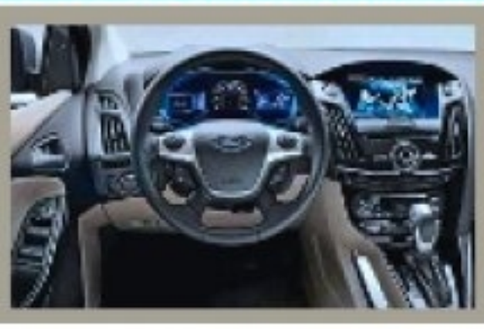
There are some issues to address. For starters, it's not easy to achieve the car's advertised fuel economy numbers, and doing so requires some unrealistic driving habits.

If you're going to get an EcoBoost Focus, you should either get a fun one like the ST or RS, or else stick with the naturally aspirated model.

THE CHECKLIST | 2016 FORD FOCUS 1.0-LITRE ECOBOOST

THE BASICS

Engine: 1.0-litre three-cylinder
Power: 123-hp, 125 lb-ft of torque
Transmission: six-speed manual or automatic
Fuel Economy (L/100 km): **Manual:** 7.8 city, 5.7 highway, 6.8 combined. **Automatic:** 8.5 city, 5.9 highway, 7.3 combined
Price (CAD): Starts at $21,199



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- Looks good

LEAVE IT

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Vanquish Zagato revving up

CONTRIBUTED

ASTON MARTIN

Concept coupe becomes reality

The stunning Aston Martin Vanquish Zagato is heading to production.

Limited to 99 units, the Aston Martin Vanquish Zagato first debuted as a concept last month at the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este in Lake Como, Italy. Under the hood will be a V12 engine with 590 horsepower, allowing the coupe to accelerate from zero-to-60 mph in 3.5 seconds.

JASON SIU/AUTOGUIDE.COM

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NISSAN

Future Leaf to increase range

A Nissan engineer let slip that the new Leaf electric car will have over 200 miles of range.

Nissan's global director of electric vehicle engineering, Kazuo Yajima, told Autoblog that a new 60-kWh battery pack is coming in the next Leaf that will allow it to travel between 210 and 220 miles on one charge.

Yajima wouldn't say when the next Leaf will arrive, but it's expected to be a 2017 model car.

STEPHEN ELMER/AUTOGUIDE.COM

TESLA

Model S doubles as boat: CEO

Apparently water and electric cars can go together.

It's understandable to think an electric car driving through a flood would have terrible results, but one Tesla Model S owner in Kazakhstan drove through a flooded tunnel, and CEO Elon Musk approved. Naturally, this isn't something Musk recommends, but he doesn't hesitate to claim that the Model S "floats well enough to turn it into a boat for short periods of time."

By no means is the Tesla Model S an amphibious car, but it does bring up another benefit of electric-battery power compared to a standard combustion engine. Standard gasoline engines that use an intake would have disastrous results once water hits the engine bay, but the Model S churns on despite being submerged in quite a bit of water.

It also seems that Musk has an interest in creating a car that can be submerged underwater. In a follow up tweet, he references a "TSWLM car," pointing to James Bond's Lotus Esprit in The Spy Who Loved Me that could transform into a submarine.

JASON SIU/AUTOGUIDE.COM

GETTY IMAGES

WHEELS ROUNDUP
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DRIVE BRIEF

Jeep Compass, Patriot production ends in winter

Jeep will continue to build the small Compass and Patriot models until the end of 2016, which means they will be sold as 2017 model year vehicles.

The two small Jeep models will be replaced by a single model, which will be built in Mexico starting in late January 2017, according to Automotive News. The current Compass and Patriot will continue to be built in Belvidere, Ill., until Dec. 23, 2016.

The new model will slot in between the Renegade and the Cherokee, though it will be built on a widened and stretched version of the Renegade platform.

Production at the Belvidere plant will pick back up in May of 2017 with the assembly of the Cherokee, making space for the Toledo, Ohio plant to build the Wrangler family.

STEPHEN ELMER/AUTOGUIDE.COM

GETTY IMAGES

GREEN TECHNOLOGY

VW could scrap 40 models to make room for next-gen vehicles

Volkswagen could cut as many as 40 models to help make way for the company's next generation of cars.

VW announced its future plans last week, stating its intention to build an onslaught of electric vehicles along with investing in ride-sharing services and autonomous driving. Billions of euros will be needed to fund the new plan, as Volkswagen tries to re-establish itself as a green-car leader by 2025.

This will lead to the company cutting more than 40 current vehicle models, according to German newspaper Handelsblatt. A spokesperson from Volkswagen confirmed at least some of the info to Automotive News, saying "a decision on how many models will be phased out or ceased has not been taken yet." STEPHEN ELMER/AUTOGUIDE.COM

metro SPORTS

In the first 96 hours of free agency, NBA teams committed about $3 billion toward contracts — that's almost $9,000 a second over four days

Bringer of Royal pain

MLB

Donaldson belts 2 homers, scores 4 runs in Blue Jays' win

Less than an hour after being named to the American League all-star team for a third straight season, Josh Donaldson continued to prove he belongs among the game's elite.

The Blue Jays third baseman hit two home runs and scored four times to back a solid start from R.A. Dickey as Toronto beat the Kansas City Royals 8-3 on Tuesday.

It was Donaldson's eighth career multi-homer game and fifth with the Blue Jays (47-39).

The 30-year-old was officially 3-for-4 but also reached on a fielder's choice. His four runs scored gave him a Blue Jays pre-all-star game record of 77.

Troy Tulowitzki, with a three-run shot, and Ezequiel Carrera also went deep for Toronto. Edwin Encarnacion drove in a run with a base hit and Kevin Pillar added a sacrifice fly.

Dickey (6-9) scattered four hits, three walks and two runs over seven innings. The knuckleballer also fanned eight en route to his first win of the year at Rogers Centre (1-6).

Cheslor Cuthbert hit a two-run shot and drove in another run for Kansas City (43-40). Chris Young (2-8) shouldered the loss after allowing six runs over 2-1/3 innings.

Encarnacion and right-hander Marco Estrada were also named to the AL all-star team while Canadian left-fielder Michael Saunders was revealed as one of the Final Vote nominees for the last roster spot which will be determined by fans and announced Friday.

Saunders was 2 for 4 with a double in Tuesday's game. The Victoria native is batting .290 on the season.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Josh Donaldson admires his first-inning home run against the Royals on Tuesday night in Toronto. TOM SZCZERBOWSKI/GETTY IMAGES

TUESDAY In Toronto

8	3
BLUE JAYS	ROYALS

Five Cubs voted to start in all-star game

The Chicago Cubs became the first team since the 1976 Cincinnati Reds' Big Red Machine to have five players voted as all-star game starters when their entire infield earned the honour Tuesday along with centre-fielder Dexter Fowler.

First baseman Anthony Rizzo, second baseman Ben Zobrist, shortstop Addison Russell and third baseman Kris Bryant also were elected. The only other team to start four infielders was the 1963 St. Louis Cardinals.

Seven Cubs were picked in all, with Jake Arrieta and Jon Lester selected for the National League pitching staff.

Boston has six all-stars. Designated hitter David Ortiz, shortstop Xander Bogaerts and outfielders Jackie Bradley Jr. and Mookie Betts were all elected to start for the American League. Steven Wright and Craig Kimbrel were selected for the pitching staff. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WIMBLEDON

Williams sisters advance to semis

The Williams sisters could be headed for another meeting in a Grand Slam final.

Venus Williams made it back to the Wimbledon semifinals for the first time in seven years on Tuesday, while defending champion Serena Williams advanced to her 10th final four at the All England Club.

Five-time champion Venus, 36, beat Yaroslava Shvedova of Kazakhstan 7-6 (5), 6-2, advancing to the semifinals for the first time since 2009 and first time at any major since the 2010 U.S. Open.

A short while later, Serena beat Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia 6-4, 6-4.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

> **I want her to win so bad — obviously not in the final if I'm there.**
> Serena Williams

IN BRIEF

Nowitzki, Mavericks agree on 2-year contract

A person with knowledge of the deal says the Mavericks and Dirk Nowitzki have reached agreement on a two-year contract that could get the star forward to 20 seasons in Dallas.

The agreement would be worth roughly $20 million per season with a player option in the second year.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Redblacks tandem earns weekly award again

Ottawa quarterback Trevor Harris, Redblacks teammate Chris Williams and Calgary running back Jerome Messam are the CFL's top performers of the week.

Harris and Williams were also named top performers last week. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Backup goaltender Kuemper stays with Wild

The Minnesota Wild have signed goalie Darcy Kuemper to a one-year, $1.55-million contract.

The Wild announced the signing on Tuesday.

The 26-year-old Kuemper went 6-7-5 with a .915 save percentage and a 2.43 goals-against average for the Wild last season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kittel sprints to Tour de France stage victory

German rider Marcel Kittel claimed the fourth and longest stage of the Tour de France after a mass sprint on Tuesday.

It was Kittel's ninth career stage win at the Tour.

World champion Peter Sagan finished third and kept the yellow jersey.

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FIBA BASKETBALL

Canada wins opener

Toronto Raptors point guard Cory Joseph led Canada to a 77-69 win over Turkey on the opening day of the FIBA Olympic basketball qualifying tournament.

Joseph led the Canadian attack Tuesday in Manila, Philippines, with 21 points, five assists and three rebounds.

The No. 8-ranked Turks pulled within five late in the second quarter but Joseph and Tristan Thompson of the Cleveland Cavaliers quashed the momentum as 26th-ranked Canada entered halftime with a 39-30 lead.

Canada outshot Turkey from the floor, hitting 42 per cent of field-goal attempts and 37 per cent from three-point territory. The Canadians also posted a stellar 83 per cent rating from the free-throw line.

"Obviously they're a very good basketball nation and it was a hard fought win," said Canadian coach Jay Triano.

Thompson and Phil Scrubb each scored 10 points for Canada while Sinan Guler led Turkey with 14 points.

"It was a good win, we fought hard," said Joseph. "We still have a lot to work on, but ultimately we got the job done, we've just got to keep on continuing to build throughout the tournament."

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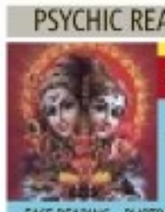

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PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

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Ready in
Prep time: 2 hours
Cook time: 15 minutes

Ingredients
- 2 cups water
- 1/4 cup Dijon mustard, divided
- 4 thin-cut boneless pork loin chops
- 2 teaspoons extra-virigin olive oil
- 2 granny smith apples, cored and quartered
- 2 tablespoons goat cheese
- salt and freshly ground pepper

Directions

1. In a large, plastic storage bag, combine water, 3 tablespoons mustard, 1 tablespoon salt and pork chops. Shake well and refrigerate for 2 to 4 hours; drain well and discard brine.

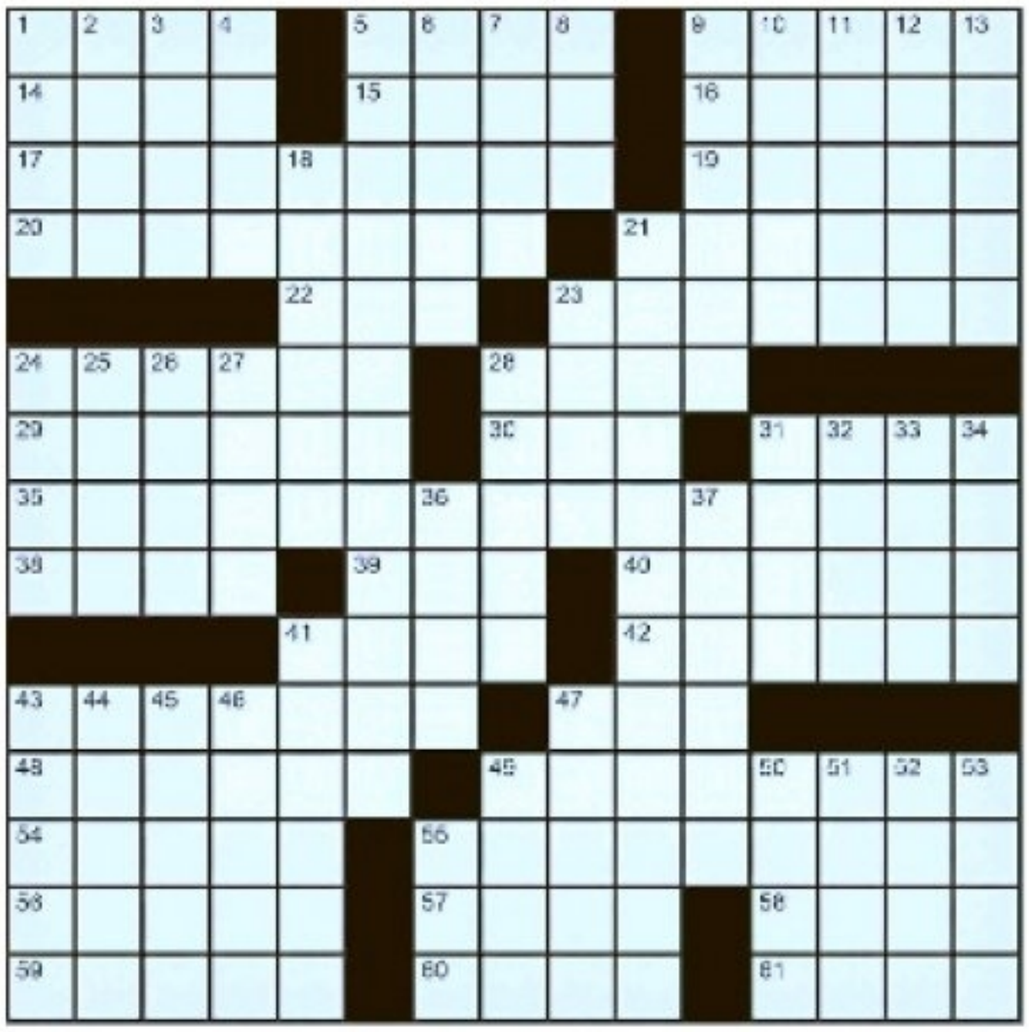
2. Preheat grill to medium high heat. Combine remaining 1 tablespoon of mustard and oil in a small bowl and brush over apple quarters and pork chops.

3. Place on grill, flipping halfway through, until pork is gold brown and cooked through, and apples are charred but still juicy. Apples will lonly need 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer them to plates and then add pork when it is finished. Garnish with goat cheese and serve.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Leaf to Maple branch link
5. Grub
9. Car's stopper
14. Like a hooting bird
15. Five-star
16. Cite
17. What the homeowner is asking for, such as in a real estate ad: 2 wds.
19. Chipmunk's chew
20. Cariole = _-_ carriage
21. Harbour structures
22. Bon _ (Witticism)
23. Shakespeare's fantastical play, The _
24. Particular prickly plant
28. British supermodel Kate
29. Animal Farm author George
30. Deep-into-sleep
31. Swell
35. Canada's 8th Prime Minister: 3 wds.
38. Wild blue yonder's
39. "Cold Mountain" (2003) role
40. Bitterly complained
41. Similar
42. Says "Do this, this and that."
43. Fruity frozen dessert
47. "I Am _" (2001)
48. Ritzy roe on hors d'oeuvres trays
49. Charmed
54. Insurance company gig
55. Whole grain recipe component: 2 wds.
56. Rene Descartes: "Je _, donc je suis." (I think, therefore I am)
57. Hawkeye State
58. Comic actress Madeline
59. Insert
60. "_ 101" (TV show Britney Spears' sister Jamie Lynn starred on)
61. _ Machines (Casino games)

DOWN
1. _ career (Ex-band member's undertaking)
2. _-size bed
3. Other
4. Legendary tale
5. 'Canada's First Lady of Country Music': 2 wds.
6. Operate a crane in a way
7. As soon as...
8. Teensy
9. 19th-century German composer Johannes
10. Post-game analysis
11. "Fortune is painted blind, with a muffler _ her eyes..." - Shakespeare
12. Woodworking cuts
13. Surrealist artist Max
18. Grapefruit-like fruit
21. Hip-and-happening Winnipeg neighbourhood centred around Sherbrook Street: 2 wds.
23. Talk up/boast
24. Flip
25. Mr. Estrada
26. Haywire
27. Sunday church deliveries, for short
28. Erin of "Happy Days"
31. Canadian star of classic TV series "Dark Shadows", Jonathan _
32. Loafing
33. _-do-well
34. Finishes
36. Change in the newsroom
37. Viking ship crew
41. Decreaser
43. Scenic suffix to 'Sea'
44. Tom _ (Robert Duvall's character in 'Godfather' movies)
45. Function to attend
46. Get the shampoo out
47. Lucy _ (Main character in Charlotte Bronte's 1853 novel Villette)
49. 'Switch' suffix
50. Bible-style vessels
51. Oman money
52. Hello Heellloo! Heellllooooo!
53. Autoshop repair
55. Industry, colloquially

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
You will enjoy redecorating where you live or buying beautiful things for home and family. This is a great day to entertain at home. Invite the gang over!

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Your social skills are tops today! Enjoy schmoozing with partners, close friends, siblings and neighbors. This is a strong day for writers and actors, teachers and salespeople.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Trust your moneymaking ideas! This is a good day for business and commerce. Financial deals will be positive. Shopping for beautiful things will please you.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You feel friendly and sociable today. (Many of you also are passionate and sexy!) Enjoy schmoozing with others, because you will assert yourself with style and diplomacy.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Today the Moon is in your sign, which is empowering. Some of you will enjoy secret flirtations or clandestine love affairs. However, you will be more emotional than usual.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
This is a great day to relate to friends or members of groups. In fact, a friend might become a lover. It's a good day for meetings, classes and large conferences.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Relations with bosses, parents, teachers and VIPs are excellent today. Expect someone to ask for your creative advice or input about design, layout and the appearance of something.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Travel for pleasure appeals today. However, some of you will be attracted to someone who is different or from another culture. Go after opportunities in publishing, medicine, the law and higher education.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Gifts, goodies and favors from others will come your way today. This is a good day to ask for a loan or mortgage.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Relations with partners and close friends will be warm and lively today. Even your dealings with the general public are excellent.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Co-workers are supportive today, which is why this is a good day to move forward at your job. If you suggest something, others will follow or agree with you.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
This is a romantic, flirtatious day! New love will blossom for some of you. Many of you will enjoy subtle flirtations and form contacts with others. It's a great day to socialize!

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

	4	7	2	6	1			
		3			8	7	2	
		9			3			8
	6					8		4
1							6	5
5							9	
	9					1		
		5			6			
			7	4				

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Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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9	4	8	5	7	3	6	1	2
2	5	3	1	6	9	4	7	8
1	6	7	4	2	8	5	3	9
6	3	1	9	5	7	2	8	4
4	2	9	3	8	1	7	6	5
7	8	5	6	4	2	1	9	3
8	1	2	7	3	5	9	4	6
3	7	6	2	9	4	8	5	1
5	9	4	8	1	6	3	2	7

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